THE AMBITIONS OF A WORLDLY WOMAN



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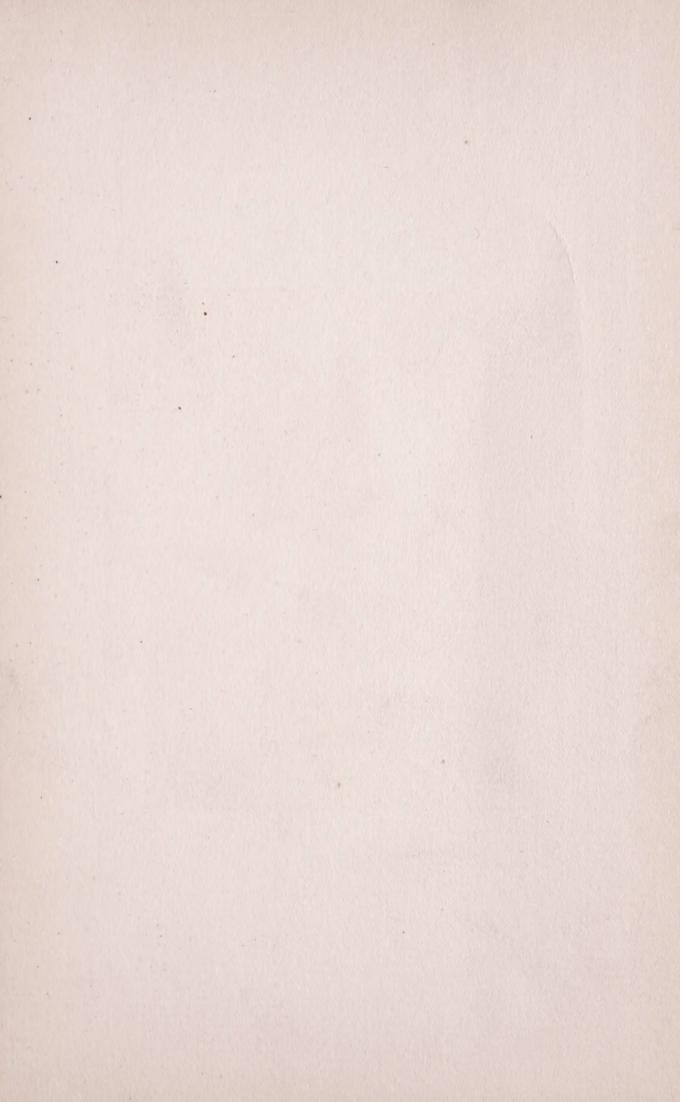


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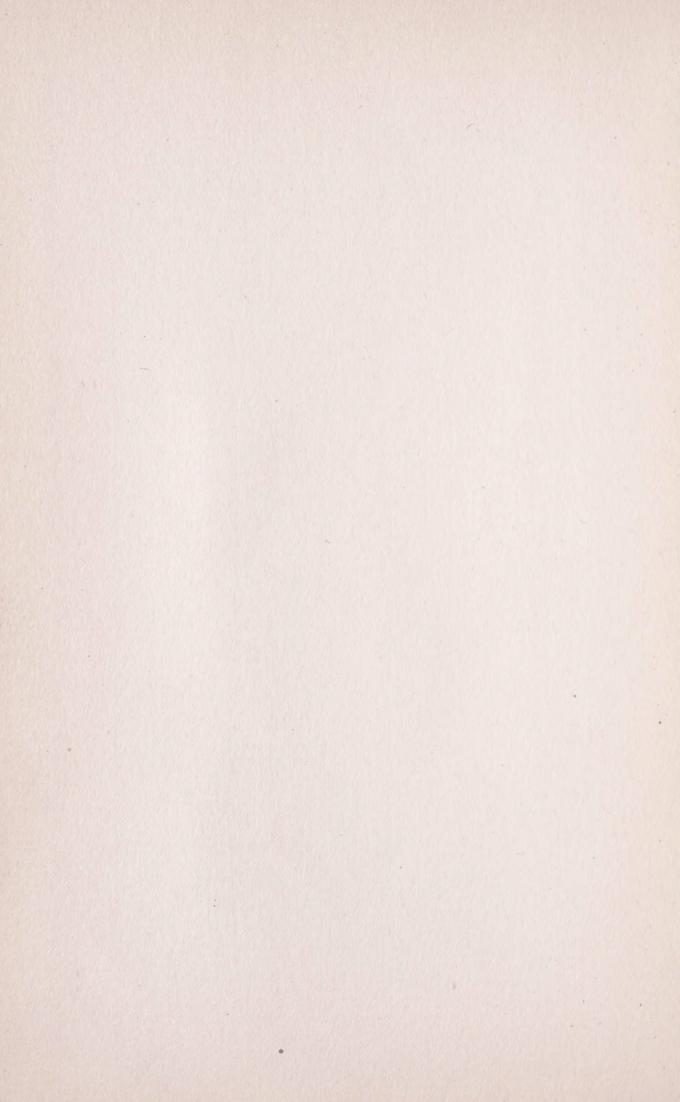
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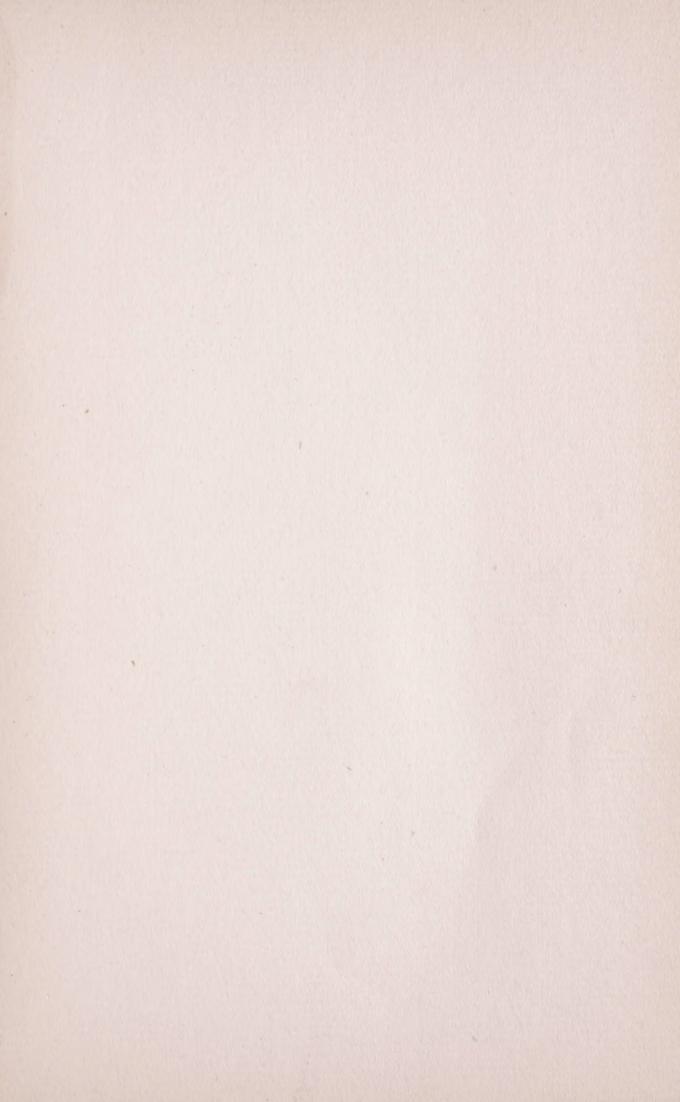
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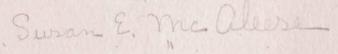


ALICE E. MURRAY.

THE AMBITIONS OF A WORLDLY WOMAN

BY

ALICE E. MURRAY





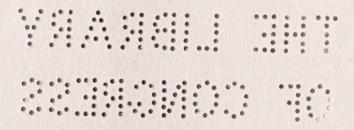
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THE AMBITIONS OF A WORLDLY WOMAN.

CHAPTER I.

IN THE year 1865, in the country village of C—, there lived a couple whose name, for a reason of the writer's own, shall be known as that of Brown.

John Brown was a fine looking man of five and twenty, and his wife a dashing woman of three and twenty, with eyes as black as coal and her magnifi-

cent hair the color of the raven.

As the years passed and children came to bless their happy home, Lettie Brown's one aim in life was to become rich. As she was always sure of her fond husband's consent, she begged him to start out in the liquor business, as she maintained there was more money in it and was to be had more rapidly and easily by the sale of rum than by spinning in a woolen factory, which he was now doing.

Accordingly John Brown secured a house in one of the busy highways of the village, where he started his new enterprise. He still held his position in the factory, while his wife undertook to look after their new business, which proved a veritable gold mine, for their bar was never without a customer nor their till without funds.

In the same village lived a young couple just starting out in life, with every prospect of a happy

future before them.

Philip Burns was a young man of one and twenty, and an excellent workman. His wife, a beautiful young woman of nineteen, loved her husband dearly and Annie Burns found her love for her husband too great to chide him.

"Philip, where have you been so late this even-

ing?" his wife asked.

"Oh, I met some of my old friends and we stopped in at Brown's. I'm sorry, wife, to have

caused you anxiety."

"Never mind, Philip, dear, but I hope you will not stay from home so late again. You know I feel very lonely when you are not here."

"John Brown and Lettie certainly have a fine business up there, and are making money fast,"

said her husband.

"Philip, I would rather not have my little children present to hear the conversation of people who know little of anything they may say or do when under the influence of rum."

"Well, Annie, I admit that it is not a very good business to be in when you have little children to bring up, but the Browns do not look at it in that

way," he replied.

"My dear Philip, I would rather go from door to door and ask for some honest labor than to enjoy the money that has been the downfall of my fellow creatures, which you know is always the case in the sale of rum," his wife exclaimed.

CHAPTER II.

FIVE years have passed since John Brown started his new enterprise. His wife's words have proven true, for he has made money rapidly. A new place has been erected to fill the wants of his increasing business. He now has one of the finest bars within twenty miles of the village, great glittering mirrors from ceiling to floor, cases of beautiful stuffed birds and cut glass, with the added brilliancy of his dashing black-eyed wife, as bar-maid—all is bait thrown out to lure the footsteps of the foolish, and the many who can trace their downfall and blighted manhood to their first glass of rum in the gilded barroom of John Brown's new hotel.

Their family now numbers six children, four daughters and two sons. Mary Brown was the eldest, and to her and her sister Hettie fell the care of their handsome new home. Their mother was very exacting in everything pertaining to her handsome dwelling, in fact, her house was run by clockwork, and the two eldest daughters found their lot in life far from pleasant in their magnificent home, under her proud, exacting rule. The younger members

of the Brown family had a very good time, as Nellie, Agnes, Tom and Harold all attended the public school in the village, and their parents, being very much taken up by the pressing demands of their business, found very little time to bestow upon them. So they were free to roam at will and enjoy their young lives in any manner they chose. It mattered not what they did if they kept out of their busy parents' way.

"Mary, why do I still find you at this ironing? Here it is almost four o'clock and this work not finished. Your idleness almost makes me out of

temper," her mother exclaimed.

"Mother, you know we had to stop to get lunch

for those strangers who called."

"I always find you ready to offer your lame excuses, but you know they have no weight in my estimation. Get to work and let me see every piece finished within half an hour. You are two of the most idle girls I ever knew. You are not worth your clothes. I spend more money upon you than would pay four good servants."

"Well, mother, it would take four good women to do the work of this house as you wish it done."

"Mary, by the way you speak one would think that I needed instruction as to what this house requires. Please keep your information until I see fit to ask you for it. I wish to see no more such slow work as I have found here to-day," she exclaimed, as she left the presence of her daughter and swept her trailing skirts from the laundry.

"I knew we would be scolded for not having this

work finished," wearily said the girl.

"I am getting tired of mother's conduct," answered her sister.

"Why, we are driven like horses in performing the duties of this house. I wouldn't mind it so much if we did not try our best to please her in everything, but I know that I, for one, will do so no longer. I am tired of being driven to death," Mary exclaimed.

"I know you feel disheartened," said her sister sympathetically, "but mother never gives it a thought that the work of this house is too much

for us or she would surely help us."

"It makes me so angry, for no matter what fault mother has to find with us she always flings it in our faces. The money she spends for our dresses I am sure she finds pleasure in, or you and I would often have to go begging for a new dress."

"I do hope you will excuse mother, for I know that she never gives it a thought when she speaks

of all the money she spends upon us."

"Well, I think she knows how it hurts us to have her fling it in our face about the expense of

our dress, and that is why she does it."

"I believe you would really let mother walk over you, Hettie, and you would never say a word, but I am not going to stand it any longer, and that is the end of it," Mary exclaimed angrily.

CHAPTER III.

PHILIP BURNS was left to go his way and we now find him a wreck, while his once happy home is overcast by gloom because of his love for strong drink.

"Philip, I am sorry to see you have broken your

promise again."

"Dear wife, I tried so hard to keep it, but it was all in vain. I met some of my old companions tonight and they invited me to join them in a glass, and, Annie dear, I know you would have pitied me had you heard the way they jeered when I refused their invitation. So I went with them and after having broken my promise to you I cared not what I did."

"Oh, Philip! it is the same old story. How

much money have you squandered to-night?"

"This is all I have left from my week's wages."
"What are we to do?" his heart-broken wife ex-

claimed. "Only one dollar left out of twenty-five and your poor wife and children starving. Oh,

God! Look down upon us with mercy."

"Oh! If I only had the strength to keep my promise to you; but, dear wife, you do not know what it is to be tempted as I have been to-night."

"Dear Philip, if you could only conquer your false pride you would overcome your temptation," she said sadly. "How am I to go to the store without the money I justly owe. It is winter and not a spark of fire for our grate; all has gone for rum. Our poor children to be pointed at with scorn as the children of Philip Burns the drunkard."

"If I could only bring you back the money I

have squandered to-night.'

"Philip, you know that has gone forever. I myself must try to keep the wolf from the door, as my only hope is gone," his wife replied, as she looked upon the besotted features of her husband, and heaved a deep, troubled sigh while tears of deep sorrow fell upon the sewing that she held in her hands.

Katie approached her mother's side and threw

her arm around her neck.

"Never mind, mother, dear, do not weep so," Katie pleaded, as she wiped her heart-broken mother's tear-stained face. "Mother, dear, do let me go to Mrs. Jones and see if we cannot get some sewing to do. You know you always said they were such true friends when you and father started out in life together."

"My dear child, things have changed since those happy days. The Joneses have wealth while we have only poverty. God's ways seem very strange."

"I shall go and ask for work."

"I suppose you and Katie think you are going to have things all your own way, but you're not, for I have a plan in view to help you."

"What is it, Frank?" his mother asked.

"I shall start out to-morrow morning early to

call on the people in our neighborhood and ask them to give me work that I can do before and after school hours."

"Who would have thought of that?"

"It may not be very much, but I shall do my best."

"My dear children, I hope that you may both meet with the success your noble efforts merit and I trust that you will ask God to help you bear the trials that may overtake you, for you will find many. And now, good night, my dear children."

"Philip, has it not touched your heart to hear

those noble children's plans?"

"Wife, it pains me very much."

"Won't you try for their sake to overcome your great appetite for rum, Philip?"

"I have tried so often, and it seems useless,"

he replied."

"Despair not of God's great mercy," his wife answered.

"How can you ever forgive me for all the sorrow I have caused you and the children by my love for rum?"

"Do not forget, Philip, the words of the Lord, forgive as we are to be forgiven," she answered. "Shun your evil companions. They are but snakes in the grass to you. Your false pride is your besetting sin. You would rather have the praises of your ill-chosen friends than their jeers, but the latter would be better for you to-night than all their honeyed words," his wife exclaimed.

CHAPTER IV.

"MARY, here is a letter for you."

"It is from Baltimore and Bella Brointon has invited me to pay her a visit," said Mary, after reading it.

"What a pleasure it would be for you, Mary,"

Hettie exclaimed.

"Yes, but a double share of work to fall to your lot in my absence."

Agnes ran to her mother.

"Oh, mamma," she exclaimed, "Mary has just received a letter from Bella Brointon, asking her to pay her a visit."

"Agnes, you are easily carried away," her mother

replied haughtily.

"Don't you think it would be fine, mamma, for

Mary to have a few weeks' rest?"

"Agnes, you speak as though Mary never did anything but work, and I know of no two girls who do less than she and Hettie."

"I think they do more work than any two girls

I know."

"You know very little of what you are talking about and you are a very poor judge. What did

the girls at school have to say about your new

dresses to-day?"

"They went wild over them. They never saw anything like them before and Maud Elger has invited Nellie and I up there on Saturday; but, mamma, we know she just wants her mamma's dressmaker to copy our dresses."

"Just as soon as Maud Elger has a dress made like yours or Nellie's you shan't wear those dresses again. I suppose they all try to keep up to you girls in dress, but I shall certainly give them plenty to do if they try to keep up to my daughters."

"I heard one of the head teachers talking on dress to-day, and she said she had never seen a more queenly girl than Katie Burns; no matter if it were only a poor, faded gingham, full of patches, Katie always looked better than any of us."

"What! That poor, starved looking thing.

never saw any beauty about her."

"Mamma, you should look at her beautiful hair; and her eyes are magnificent. Why, we school-girls have often seen strangers stop and look after Katie Burns, while we, with all our fine clothes, never caused anyone to stop and look at us, and I think that what the head teacher said must be true."

"Agnes, I do not understand such taste," Mrs. Brown exclaimed. "By the way, Mary, what is going on in Baltimore, that Bella Brointon wishes you to go and see her?"

"They are giving a grand ball on Thanksgiving Eve and Bella wants me to be there," Mary an-

swered.

"Well, I suppose you must go."

"Why, mother, I could never think of such a thing as leaving Hettie to do all the work of this great house. If you would only bring in someone to help her I would enjoy my trip very much,"

Mary replied.

"No stranger comes in here to slight my house work, so you can give up such a thought," angrily responded the mother. "Who ever heard of such a thing. Hettie can do it all and have plenty of spare time."

CHAPTER V.

"Is Mrs. Jones at home?" asked a sweet young voice as her ring was answered by a new Irish servant girl.

"Well! Shure, I believe she is, miss."

"May I see her?"

"Shure and I will have to see her first afore I kin tell yez. My misthress is very busy at prisent," Bridget replied, as she left Katie to go to her mistress.

"Shure, misthress, there is a swate young girl at the dure wantin' to know if she can see you."

"What is her name, Bridget?" her mistress inquired.

"Och, shure she has none."

"Why, Bridget, how do you come to know that?"

her mistress laughingly asked.

"Indade, misthress, she had no paper with a name on like the rest of the ladies and that is why I know she has none," Bridget answered.

"You mean that the young lady has no card!"

Mrs. Jones exclaimed.

"Well! Shure. I guess that's what you call it, but indade I'll never learn what you call half the things in this wild country," Bridget exclaimed. "Never mind, Bridget, you do very well to be only over a week, and we all have to learn," Mrs. Jones said in a kind voice. "Go down and take the young lady into the drawing room and tell her to wait until I come down."

"What did you wish to see me about?" Mrs.

Jones asked pleasantly, as she entered.

"I came to see if you had any sewing or mending that you wished to have done," Katie replied.

"Why, you are just the person I have been inquiring for. Can you begin work this morning?"

"I would like to take it home. It was for my mother that I came to get the work and I am to help her at home with any work I may obtain," Katie said.

"What is your name?" Mrs. Jones inquired. "Katie Burns, and my mother's name is Annie

Burns. We live in the village of C---."

"Burns! What! Is your father's name Philip? Well! You are never Annie Burns' daughter? What is your father's trade?"

"He is a carriage maker," Katie replied.

"How strange. To think I have found my old friends again," Mrs. Jones exclaimed in surprise. "How are your dear mother and father?" "They are very well, thank you," Kate answered.

"Come into the dining room, dear, and let me give you a cup of coffee. You have had a long, cold ride this morning. What a surprise this will be to my husband. Your parents and my husband and I were schoolmates together," Mrs. Jones said.

"Yes, I have heard my mother speak of those

happy years," she answered.

In a tew minutes a fair, handsome man of thirty-

five entered the magnificent dining room.

"Well, Fannie, you really have caught me napping this morning. I am at sea as to who this young lady may be," her husband said as he scanned Katie Burns' face.

"I am going to let you guess."

"I gave it up the minute I entered this young lady's presence," he said, laughingly.

"I am Philip Burns' daughter," Katie answered.
"This is indeed a surprise, and a pleasant one.
Tell me how are all our old friends?" he asked.

"They are well," Katie answered. "What is your father doing now?"

"He is working at his trade."

"Is he not in business for himself then?" asked Mr. Jones in surprise.

"No, sir," Katie replied.

"Well, that seems strange," said Mr. Jones. "I always thought Philip would go in business for himself. Have you any brothers or sisters?"

"I have one brother, sir."
"How old is he, Katie?"

"Fourteen."

"And how old are you, my dear?"

"I am sixteen," she answered.

"It makes one feel old to see the friends of their youth with grown-up children. I suppose, Fannie, you are going to enjoy the company of your old school friend's daughter to-day."

"It certainly would be a great pleasure to me," said Katie, "but I must go home on the earliest train. Mother will be so anxious until I return."

"I am sorry to hear that, Katie. I had set my

heart upon having you meet my two daughters, Ethel and May, but I will not detain you if you really must go," said Mrs. Jones. "George, are you going down town now?"

"Yes, Fannie, I have an engagement at the office

at ten," her husband answered.

"Well, I have a little business for you to attend to before you leave home this morning," Mrs. Jones said.

"All right, Fannie dear. Is it to be the dress-maker or the candlestick maker this morning?"

"It happens to be neither, my dear," she an-

swered.

"Come into the library then, Fannie. Time is going. Good-bye, Katie, and please remember me to your parents. I will call to see them very soon, now that I know where to find them."

"Thank you, Mr. Jones," Katie replied.

"I am very much afraid that everything is not as it should be in the home of our old schoolmates," said Mrs. Jones, as they entered the library.

"Why?" he asked in surprise.

"Well, George, Annie Burns' daughter came to our door this morning for work."

"I am very sorry to hear that. I do wonder

what ill luck has overtaken them."

"Indeed, I do not know, but I do know that

something is wrong."

"Then, dear, do not allow their daughter to leave our house without a gift. They have too much spirit for charity. I shall make it my business to see them myself very soon. Is not Katie a beautiful girl? What a magnificent woman she will make," he exclaimed.

"Yes, and such charming manners. I would

really like our daughters to cultivate them."

"My dear, it would be to anyone's advantage to do so, but I must leave you now, or I shall reach the office too late."

"Good-bye, dear husband." She hastened to Katie.

"I will select some work for you to take and the rest I will send by express; and, Katie, I have a little present for your dear mother. It has just been fifteen years since we met and tell her that I hope she will celebrate our reunion in a fitting manner. Good-bye, dear. Tell your mother that I hope to have the pleasure of seeing her very soon and I wish you would come in often. I know my daughters would be delighted to know you."

"I shall be very happy to meet your daughters, and I know that I should enjoy their company very much," Katie replied. "Good-bye, Mrs. Jones," she said, as she left the woman who had

been so kind to her.

CHAPTER VI.

"Mary, I do hope you will try to make the acquaintance of a desirable young man at this ball, for I have spared no expense on your ball gown, and I think it is high time you were making a choice of a husband. I feel sure that you will meet many young men of wealth at this ball, and with your good looks and this magnificent dress, you should have no trouble in securing a prize, but I would far rather see you an old maid than the wife of a poor man. I have noticed lately that you spend a great deal of time in the society of Arthur Long and I wish to see no more of such conduct. You really shock me. You have no ambition," her mother said with scorn.

"Mamma, I know nothing he has ever done that you or any other lady should pass him by unno-

ticed," she exclaimed.

"Oh, mamma, Mary's ball dress has just come home and we are all waiting to see it."

The box was opened and exclamations of de-

light were heard from all.

"Is it not a dream, mamma! You always select such beautiful things. I think you must make a study of it," Nellie exclaimed.

"It is only a matter of taste and there you have the key to my success," her mother replied.

"Mary, let us look at you in this beautiful gown. I am sure there will not be one dress at the ball half so stunning as this," Nellie exclaimed in de-

light.

"Well, Nellie, if you really wish it, I shall grant your request, as I shall array myself in all this finery to-night," Mary said, as she picked up the box that contained her magnificent ball gown and

hastened from the sitting room.

Three days had passed by when Mary stood in the hall dressed in a well-fitting traveling costume of silver gray broadcloth, when Jim Smith appeared in the doorway to announce that the carriage was in readiness to take Miss Brown to the depot. Mary gave them all a fond farewell and

stepped into the waiting vehicle.

On arrival at the depot, the express for Baltimore was soon announced, when she found herself seated in a luxurious chair of a Pullman coach, and the train soon pulled out from the depot. Two hours had gone by when the express pulled into the Baltimore depot, and Mary alighted upon the platform, where she was received by Bella Brointon, who bid her a very gushing welcome.

"Here we are at home. How delighted mamma will be to see you. It has been so long since we have had a visit from you. I knew she would be waiting. I shall be quite jealous of you, dear."

"Really, Mary, I thought you would never arrive.

I have counted the hours by minutes."

"Our train was delayed, Bella dear.

your mother and all the people home?" Mary asked.

"Mamma is very well; in fact, everyone is well," Bella replied. "The boys are delighted to know that you have accepted my invitation," Bella exclaimed. "Mary, how well you look after your long journey. I am always a fright after I travel, even a short distance, by rail."

"I enjoy it," Mary answered.

"One would know you do from your fresh looks," Bella said.

The two young women then entered the carriage and were soon driving over the well-paved highway. After a drive of twenty minutes the carriage entered the avenue that led to the Brointons' homestead, when a colored groom advanced to assist the fair young ladies from the vehicle. They ran lightly up the wide, marble steps and received a cheerful welcome from Mrs. Brointon, who stood at the open doorway with a sweet smile upon her well-preserved features, as she bid her guest enter the lofty, old-fashioned hallway, where a bright coal fire blazed in the wide open grate. A beautiful deer hound sprang up from the leopard skin rug and greeted their entrance with a peal of loud barking.

"Be quiet, Bruce," Bella exclaimed, when the brute again stretched himself upon the leopard

skin.

"How glad I am to see you, Miss Brown. I hope you feel no ill effects from your long journey."

"No, Mrs. Brointon, I feel very well. Mother always insists upon our taking a Pullman car, and

I think it is a necessary luxury, for they are so comfortable," Mary said.

"Show Miss Brown her room, Bella, and help

her off with her wraps."

"Come, Mary, you will have time enough before the bell rings for lunch, and I know you are in need of something to eat."

"On the contrary, Bella, I am not hungry in the least. I had something to eat on my way

through," Mary answered.

"Oh, Mary, I am so delighted, I can scarcely wait until the evening of the ball. I know you will enjoy it, too. It is going to be a very select affair, and you are sure to meet many fine young people. I am to enjoy the pleasure of having one of my dear young friends come out to-night, and I know that dear Violet will cause a flutter. She is very pretty. I am sure you will be pleased with her when you meet her, for Violet Carstein is loved by all who have the good fortune to know her. Papa always tells us she is well named, she is so lovely and retiring."

"Bella, dear, I am afraid with so many beauties present, you and I will be forced to act as wall

flowers," Mary said in a gay tone.

"Indeed, Mary, I fear nothing of the kind," Bella answered.

CHAPTER VII.

"I AM so glad to see you home again, Katie, and I know by your bundle that your journey has not been useless. Did you go anywhere else but to Mrs. Jones'?" her mother inquired.

"No, mother, I found that Mrs. Jones' work

would keep us busy for some time."

"Did you bring it all home, dear?"

"No, mother, Mrs. Jones is to send a package by express," Katie replied.

"How did Mrs. Jones treat you?"

"Mother, you would really have thought I was some great lady by the manner in which Mrs. Jones and her husband received me," she exclaimed.

"I hardly thought that wealth would make any change in our old friends, but one never can tell in these days what changes wealth may make,"

replied her mother.

"They are so glad to know where you reside, and Mrs. Jones has sent you this letter and said she hoped that you would celebrate the reunion of your old friends, as it has been just fifteen years to-day since you all met."

"How the years do fly. Look what is in this letter," her mother exclaimed in surprise. "You surely have gotten the wrong letter from Fannie Jones."

"No, mother dear, there can be no mistake, because Mrs. Jones came into the dining room herself and addressed this very letter to you; but you have not yet read it."

"Just think of it, Katie. Fannie Jones has enclosed fifteen dollars in this letter, to represent

the years we have been apart."

"That is just what a kind-hearted woman like Mrs. Jones would think of doing," said Katie.

"Did you tell Mrs. Jones how poor we really

were?"

"Oh, mother, why do you ask such a question? You know I never would ask alms while I could be self-supporting. Mr. Jones was very much surprised when I told him father was working at his trade. He was sure father had started out in business for himself."

"Poor Philip, he might have been, only for the curse of rum," her mother said sadly. "Katie, if I thought that Fannie Jones had sent me this money out of charity, I could not accept one cent

of it even though we are so poor."

"I know Mrs. Jones never intended to insult you,

mother. She meant it as a gift."

"I suppose I must write to Fannie and thank her for her kindness in remembering us in all the years we have been separated, and, Katie, I have decided this morning to go up and request Lettie Brown and her husband to sell Philip no more rum. I must try to save your father from filling a drunkard's grave!" she exclaimed in sorrow.

"Mother, I dread to have you meet that proud, cruel woman. I think you had better give up your mission."

"Katie, I must do my duty, no matter how hard it may appear."

"I only hope Mrs. Brown will not refuse your

request, mother."

"Well, dear, I will start and have the unpleasant work over," her mother replied, as she kissed Katie good-bye and left her own humble home to seek a kindness from a cruel, proud woman.

CHAPTER VIII.

"Mamma, did you ever see anything more beautiful than Mary? And what a magnificent ball gown," Bella exclaimed with delight.

"Miss Brown, you may make up your mind to

being the belle of our ball to-night, dear."

"Who selected your gown for you, Miss Brown?" Mrs. Brointon inquired.

"My mother," answered Mary.

"She has displayed the utmost taste."

"Here is the carriage," said Bella as she took Mary's arm and danced into the hall.

"Who is that beautiful girl in the Brointon set?"

"I will have to seek an introduction before I can enlighten you," Grant's friend answered.

"Here come Harry Carstein and his lovely cousin. We'll ask him to introduce our set to Miss Brointon's beautiful friend."

"Good evening, Harry. You are always sure to turn up just when you are wanted most."

"Well, what is it to be to-night, Walter?"

"Why, just lead our set over to Miss Brointon's. We are longing to learn the name of that beautiful girl at her side."

"You will not have very long to wait, Walter, as I am just taking my cousin Violet to Miss Broin-

ton," he replied.

"My dear Violet, I have been waiting for you. Allow me to introduce you to my friend, Miss Brown."

"Miss Brointon, I have a large circle of friends

seeking the same kind favor of you."

"All right, Mr. Carstein, but I am afraid I will have to select you to help me do the honors, for you know I have dear Violet's welfare to attend to to-night," Bella exclaimed.

"I hope you will enjoy our ball, Miss Brown," said Harry Carstein, when he at last found an

opportunity to talk to Mary.

"I think I am sure to do so. I enjoy dancing

so much," Mary replied.

"Are not the decorations beautiful, Harry?" Violet asked.

"I hardly think they could be more lovely."

Mary Brown was indeed a beautiful picture in her magnificent ball gown of shimmering black tulle, made over a dress of crimson satin, and looped up by beautiful crimson rosebuds, while in the coils of her exquisite blue-black hair were the same flowers nestling among their own dark green foliage, showing off her cold, proud beauty in all its glory, and many were the exclamations of admiration that fell upon her ear as Harry Carstein led her to the place of honor to lead the grand march of the ball.

Mary Brown enjoyed the great pleasure of being the belle of the ball room. When her partner led her to her chair, her large dark eyes sparkled in delight, for her heart had found its idol.

"Miss Brown, may I have one rosebud?" Harry asked as he led her to a quiet nook after the first

waltz had ended.

"Certainly, Mr. Carstein, if you really wish it," she said, as she selected a half-blown bud from her dress and placed it in his hand.

"Now, Miss Brown, may I ask you to be my

partner for this waltz?" he asked.

"I suppose you may place your name upon my tablet, as I feel rather tired, and I shall not dance any more this morning," she answered.

When the last strains of the waltz had died away, Harry led his beautiful partner to a chair.

"Now, Miss Brown, I have still another request to ask of you," he said. "May I call to see you during your stay at the Brointons'?"

"I shall be pleased to have you do so, Mr. Car-

stein," she answered.

"Mary, I have been looking for you everywhere, as the carriage is waiting for us," Bella exclaimed, as she approached the chair of her friends.

"Very well, Bella, I shall be ready to leave in

a few moments," Mary answered.

"Good night, Mr. Carstein, or rather good morning, as it is just four o'clock," Bella said, while Mary Brown placed her fair hand into Harry Carstein's and bade him farewell, as he closed the carriage door.

"Oh, Mary, I am delighted to see that you have

carried off the prize of our Thanksgiving ball. How delighted mamma will be; and, just think of it, Harry Carstein has lost his heart to-night as he stopped until the end of our ball," Bella exclaimed.

"Is that anything new for your friend?" Mary

asked, in surprise.

"My dear girl, it is the first time Harry Carstein has ever been known to do such a thing," Bella replied.

"He is an excellent dancer," Mary said.

"Well, dear, if you only knew Harry as we do, you would wonder that he could do anything without doing it well. Mamma says that Harry always puts his whole heart into everything he attempts to do, no matter how trifling it may be. And, Mary, you should just see how devoted he is to his mother. It is really a beautiful sight to see them together, he is so very attentive to her."

"Where does he live, Bella?" Mary inquired.

"They are our nearest neighbors. Their land and ours adjoin," Bella answered. "Harry Carstein is an orphan and he and his mother make their home with his uncle. I do want you to meet Harry's mother before you go home. She is a lovely old lady."

"Are they wealthy?" Mary asked.

"No, dear, Harry has his uncle to thank for everything, but he has been treated as an only son. To his uncle he owes thanks for his college course, and for everything in fact."

"At what does he employ his time?" Mary

asked.

"He is employed as a clerk in his uncle's busi-

ness house," Bella answered.

"And why have you not captured this handsome young man for yourself?" Mary laughingly inquired.

"I couldn't very well," Bella answered; "he has

no time for anyone but his dear mother."

CHAPTER IX.

"Mamma, Katie Burns' mother is out in the hall and she has requested to see you for a few moments."

"Agnes, why have you ever brought her into the hall? Why didn't you let her wait in the kitchen?" her mother asked in anger.

"How could I, when she rang the front door

bell?" Agnes retorted.

"I never saw the like of some people. I do not know what they take me for. Just think of a poor wretch like her coming to my front door. I have almost a mind to tell her what I think of her," angrily said Mrs. Brown as she swept from the room to meet her neighbor of years gone by.

"How do you do, Mrs. Brown?" said Mrs. Burns, as the proud woman of the world appeared.

"I was told that you had requested to see me. Do not keep me waiting all day. What do you wish of me?" said Mrs. Brown in her scornful manner.

"Well, Lettie, for the sake of old friendship, I am here to implore you, for the welfare of Philip Burns and his family not to sell him any more rum," she said in a tearful voice.

"Annie Burns, how dare you come into my home and dictate to me how I am to conduct my own business? I have attended to my own affairs this long and I do not feel at this late day that I am in need of anyone like you coming here to tell me what I am to do or not to do. What is your drunken husband to me?" she said as she threw back her haughty head.

"Oh, Lettie Brown, how can you be so cruel? Have you not a woman's heart within your cold,

proud breast?" said Mrs. Burns, in tears.

"Begone, Annie Burns, and never allow me to see you ringing my front door bell again. Here, Agnes, conduct this poor creature out through the kitchen."

"May God forgive you, Lettie, as I this day forgive you from my poor heart for the cruel words you have spoken," Mrs. Burns said as Agnes Brown led her through the magnificent hallway to her mother's kitchen door, where she bade her a kind good-bye, but the poor broken-hearted woman never heard her, for her heart was too deeply stung by

the words of her hard-hearted neighbor.

"I do wish that mamma was not so cold and proud. How she hurt poor Katie Burns' mother. I only wish that that poor woman had never come here to be treated so by mamma." Such were the thoughts of Agnes Brown after she had left Mrs. Burns at her mother's door. She knew that it would be useless for her to say anything to her mother in regard to her cruelty.

Hettie Brown was a beautiful girl of nineteen, with a luxurious head of hair and a transparent complexion, which was lighted by a pair of mag-

nificent large, brown eyes that were full of kindness and love. She had none of the haughtiness so marked in her mother's manner, but was loved

by everyone who knew her.

"Agnes, I know it will be impossible for me to finish all my sweeping to-day with the thousand and one things I have to do. How I do miss Mary," Hettie said; "but I don't care if mother is angry and does scold me. I can't do any more than I am able to."

"I hope Mary is enjoying her visit," Agnes said.

"I hope so, too, my dear, for it is not all pleasure we have here at home," Hettie answered.

"I wonder how you girls ever get along with mamma scolding you all day long and always finding fault with your work; but, Hettie, dear, Nellie and I will lend you a helping hand if you are afraid of having mamma get angry with you," Agnes said.

"Never mind, dear, I would rather take a scolding from mother than have you or Nellie scolded. You had better go in and finish practicing, as your friends will soon be here for you to go out with

them."

"Well, then, Hettie, if you won't allow me to help you I had better go in to my music. Goodbye," said Agnes as she left the room.

"Nellie, I do not know what can be the matter with my poor head, it feels so funny," Hettie said.

"I know what is the matter with you," said Nellie; "it is just all the worry you have about this work. You have had too much work to do since Mary went away," saying which she laid her

hand on Hettie's hot brow.

"Why, no, Nellie, dear, that has nothing to do with my headache. But, oh, what on earth can be wrong with my poor head?" she asked. "Nellie, I shall try to walk to my room if you will help me upstairs."

"Hettie, here is Tom, and he will take your arm and help you. Do come, Tom! Help me upstairs with Hettie. Why do you stand there look-

ing so helpless?" Nellie asked.

"How strange Hettie looks," Tom said. "What

has made her face so red?"

"Just as though I could answer your question, Tom," said Nellie. "Now, Hettie, dear, let me undress you so you will feel easier."

"Never mind, Nellie, just leave me alone and

tell mother that I am ill," Hettie said.

"Mamma, our Hettie is very ill," Nellie said as she entered the room in which her mother was

sitting.

"She can't be very ill for I was in the dining room only half an hour ago and she was doing her work as usual," her mother said in surprise.

"She was talking to me when she was taken ill,"

Nellie replied.

"Isn't this too bad! I don't know why Hettie should choose to get ill at this trying time, when Mary is away from home. What am I ever to do? And all this housework to attend to," she exclaimed in dismay.

"Don't you think you had better send down for Dr. Smith to come to see Hettie?" asked Nellie in

alarm.

"Hettie is not as ill as that. She has just gone to bed to escape this work," she said in anger.

Nellie went up to Hettie's room only to return immediately and insist on Tom going in haste for Dr. Smith.

"I know mamma will not see fit to have him

come," she said.

"All right, Nellie, but I hope you will not say that I was the one who brought him without mother's consent. You know she hates him like thunder," said Tom.

"Well, I don't see why she should," Nellie said. "I'm off, whatever may be the cost," said Tom

as he left the room.

"Oh, Dr. Smith, how glad I am that you have come," Nellie said as the old physician entered Hettie's room.

"What have you been trying to do?" he asked.

"I have been trying to remove Hettie's dress, but I have found it impossible," she answered.

"Where is your mother, Nellie?"

"Mamma is attending to the business, as father has been called from home."

"Is there no one here but yourself, Nellie?" he

asked.

"I am the only one at present," she replied.

"Well, Nellie, you will have to leave this sick room at once, as this is no place for you, my child," the doctor said in his kind, fatherly way.

"But, Dr. Smith, someone must stay with

Hettie," she said.

"You go downstairs, Nellie, and let your mamma know that I desire her presence at once, and I want you to stay out of this room until I give you permission to enter. This is no place for you, my child," he said, as Nellie prepared to leave the room.

"Mamma, Dr. Smith wishes to see you in Hettie's room at once," she said as she entered the pleasant sitting room in which her proud mother was.

"I would like to know who has brought Dr. Smith here?" the woman demanded in anger.

"I did, mamma. Hettie was so very ill I

couldn't help it," Nellie said.

"Nellie, I should very much like to know who is

mistress here, you or I?" her mother said.

"Well, mamma, I hope I have done no great wrong," Nellie said, "but I simply couldn't see Hettie so ill and have no physician."

"Miss Nellie, I wish you to understand that as long as you are in this house you must never act as

you have to-day."

"All right, mamma, it will never happen again."
"Mrs. Brown, I find we have a very sick girl here," the doctor said as the woman entered the room.

"What is the trouble?" she demanded.

"Your daughter has been run down by overwork that she had fallen a victim to the dreadful disease that has broken out in our town. It is nothing more or less than a severe case of smallpox," he said.

"Oh! what am I to do? There is our business to be looked after and it will never do to have it noised about that there is a case of smallpox here

in this house," she said.

"Do not let your business interests make you

blind to your daughter's welfare. Her interest should come first," he replied. "I shall send old Kate, who lives in the hollow, up here to take care of your daughter. She is a faithful old soul and as this house is very large you can easily have this wing shut off from the rest of the house, and your daughter can be kept in this room without danger to anyone here. I'll send Kate up as soon as possible to take charge of Hettie," he said as he bade Mrs. Brown "good night" and left the house.

"Well, of all things, was there ever anything so trying as this? I must think of some way to overcome this thing before I sleep." Such were the proud woman's thoughts as she sank into a chair after the doctor had gone. "I must act quickly," she said as she touched the bell that brought Jim Smith, the hostler, from his work.

"Jim," said his mistress as he came into the dining room, "have you seen that crazy Frank

Carr hanging around to-night?"

"No, mum," he answered.

"Well, keep a lookout for him and let him know that I wish him to come into the kitchen. He is sure to be hanging around somewhere to beg a drink from someone!" she exclaimed.

"All right," Jim replied as he left the presence of

his mistress.

"Good evening, Kate, how are you?"

"I believe I'm well."

"I'm very sorry, Kate, but I thought you couldn't come, so I had to get someone else."

"I is jest as well pleased," answered the darky. "Here, Kate, is something to take back home

with you. You've had a long walk up here in the cold and you will find that to be very good rum,

Kate," the proud lady said.

"Well, I neber. If you doan be giben me a full quart of good rum," Kate exclaimed. "How kind you is, misses! I think them that white folks must tell great lies, for they do say that you am the proudest and cruelest hearted woman that eber did live, and, just think of it, you have given poor old black Kate a quart of good rum," she exclaimed.

"Kate, I will have to say good night to you. I

am very busy at present."

"Well, I guess old Kate will say good night, for she knows the misses hab lots of trouble on her mind to-night," Kate replied as she left Mrs. Brown's kitchen.

"Oh! but I know what that proud woman do be about and I shall just sit up all this night, for they would have to pass my hut to take the poor honey there," Kate excitedly exclaimed as she walked away.

"Well, Frank, where have you been all evening?" Mrs. Brown asked as the crazy creature entered the

kitchen.

"Right here," he replied.

"Here is something to warm you up after being out in the cold," she said as she handed Frank Carr a glass of strong rum, which he drank like so much water. As he placed the empty glass upon the table she said, "Now, Frank, I want you to be here at one o'clock to-morrow morning to take a stranger who is ill to the hospital. Not a word to anyone, remember. When your job is done,

Frank, you are to come back here and I will meet you in this kitchen and pay you well for your work, but you must be here at four o'clock or you get neither rum nor money. Be faithful, Frank, and you will get plenty of both. Now you have heard my orders you will know what to do."

"I will, ma'am," he answered.

"Well, go now until it is time for you to do your work, but remember, Frank," she said as she opened the door and dismissed him into the night, "not one word about this is to be said to anyone."

She rang the bell that led to the stable. As Jim Smith appeared in answer to her command she

said:

"Jim, do you think that Maggie Burke is still stopping with your sister?"

"Yes, ma'am," she answered.

"Well, I want you to take the nine-forty train into the city, and if you find Maggie Burke bring her back with you in the morning, and here is some money for you. I have requested Frank Carr to look after the horses in the morning for you, but I hope you will return as early to-morrow as you can."

"Very well, mistress, I will not delay," Jim re-

plied.

"Is Hettie feeling any better, mamma?" Agnes inquired as she returned home from the home of one of her friends, where she had spent the even-

ing.

"Yes, Hettie is much better, and I do wish that you would not make so much fuss over nothing," exclaimed her mother. "I want you all to go over to the west wing of the house to sleep to-

night. The doctor has left some very strong medi-

cine to make Hettie sleep," she said.

"All right, mamma, I shall tell Nellie and the boys when they come home. What shall we do without Mary or Hettie's help in the house?"

she inquired.

"I shall find someone to do my work just as well as they have ever done it," she answered angrily. "Where are the rest of them that they are not home? It is almost ten and they should be home by now."

"They are skating, mamma," Agnes replied.

"It is a beautiful night, the moon is so full. Why have you returned so soon?" her mother asked.

"I did not go down to the creek to skate to-night, mamma," Agnes answered.

CHAPTER X.

"Mother, are you ill?" Katie Burns asked as her mother entered the door.

"No, dear, I am only very tired," her mother

replied.

"Mother, dear, you really look ten years older than when you left home this morning. I'm sure you received a cruel blow, and it has been from the hand of that proud, cold woman, Mrs. Brown," Katie exclaimed as she placed a chair for her mother before the cheerful fire. "Why did you go, dear, to let that haughty woman insult you?" "Perhaps it would have been as well, my dear.

"Perhaps it would have been as well, my dear, if I had not gone, but it is too late to regret, and thank God everyone is not so cruel as Lettie Brown," her mother answered. "Katie, I do wish you would go up to the store and pay our little bill, then bring back what we are in need of. How little Fannie Jones will ever know what a blessing her present has been to us this day. Our trials seem hard to bear, Katie, but God has never yet forsaken us in all our darkest hours. Let us try to bear it all, my child, for His dear sake,"

she said. "Well, Frank, how have you made out

to-day?"

"Mother, dear, I have met with great success to-day. Mr. Davis took me up to the 'Pines' and recommended me to Mrs. Penrose. As she was looking for someone to do her work, and found that I would suit her, she hired me to do the chores for her before and after school hours, and I am to receive two dollars and a half a week," Frank exclaimed in delight.

"Just think what a great help that will be to

us, my dear boy!" his mother exclaimed.

CHAPTER XI.

"Is that you, Frank?"
"I'm here," he replied.

"Make haste. I thought you were not coming," said Mrs. Brown as she led the way to Hettie's room. "Come, Frank! Lift the sick lady up and carry her to the cart, and after you have put her into it drive as quickly as you can to the hospital. When you reach there, ring the bell and say 'A very bad case,' but say no more. Come back here and I will be waiting for you, as I have already told you," she commanded.

"What a relief it is to have that trial over. I can rest now, and I think I had better, for I will have to meet that hateful Dr. Smith in the morning. I shall prove a match for him though. How I do hate him. He has his eyes set upon one's face so that I always feel as though he could read one's very soul. I shall have a week or more

before John comes home," she thought.

As the clock struck four she said, "Frank will be home soon, and I shall then know whether my plans have been successfully carried out."

When at last she heard his footsteps upon the

porch she went to the door to let him in.

"Well done, Frank; here is your money and your rum. You may stop in the stable until dawn, when you must be up and off, and if you dare show your crazy face around here I shall have you put in jail. Go now, Frank, and do not

forget my warning," she said.

"I must get some rest, for I shall need it today. I have to face old Dr. Smith and I have a strange woman to see to," she said to herself as she went to her room. Little she thought how her night's work would end, but what cared she for the daughter she had turned from her home?

CHAPTER XII.

WHEN Mary Brown opened her eyes she found the sun high in the heavens. "My! How late it must be! I have slept so soundly! I suppose I must have been tired after my night of dissipation," she thought.

Bella knocked upon Mary's door and as Mary

bade her enter she exclaimed:

"Why, Bella, how late it must be! I am almost

ashamed to go down to breakfast so late."

"Why, my dear, I have not as yet been downstairs to-day," replied Bella, "and we shall only have mamma to greet us, dear."

"Suppose we go down now," said Mary, as she placed her arm in Bella's and led the way to the

dining room.

"Mamma, dear, this is the last act after the ball," Bella said laughingly as she kissed her mother's cheek.

"I hope you have rested well," Mrs. Brointon

said as the girls sat down.

"Well, I should think we have," said Mary. "Why, it is two o'clock! The poor boys! How tired they must be after dancing all night."

"I don't suppose they mind it, dear," Mrs.

Brointon replied.

CHAPTER XIII.

"Nellie, I wish you and Agnes to go to your Aunt Kate's this morning, so go and get ready," her mother said as the girls rose from the breakfast table. "Harold, go and tell Tom to get the carriage ready to take the girls to the station," she commanded.

"Why, where is Jim Smith?" Harold inquired

in surprise.

"He will not be here until noon to-day," his

mother replied.

"Here comes Jim now, mamma, and there is a woman with him!" Harold exclaimed in surprise.

"Jim, you certainly have not lost any time, and I see you have brought Maggie Burke back with you," Mrs. Brown said as Jim appeared.

"I suppose you have come ready for work,

Maggie," said the haughty mistress.

"Well, shure mum, I believe work is me trade,"

Maggie replied very independently.

"Come upstairs and take off your wraps so that you may go to work at once," Mrs. Brown commanded. "When you are ready come downstairs and I will instruct you in what you are to do. Come Nellie and Agnes, if you do not hurry you will miss the train," she said.

"We are ready, mamma. Good-bye."

"Now, remember, girls, you are not to come home until I send for you," she said as the girls

bade her their last "good-byes."

"Come, Maggie, I want you to tear this room out and take all the paper off the walls, and you must have it done within an hour," said her mistress.

"Shure! who is to help?" Maggie inquired.

"Why, no one," her mistress replied.

"Well, faith, if you want this room torn out and all this foine paper torn off, just for pastime you had better get a couple of good stout men in here. 'Tis not Maggie Burke that will do it," she said.

"Make haste, Maggie, and if you find that you really can't do it within an hour, do it in you own time, but I am very anxious to have it done to-

day," her mistress said.

"Shure, ma'am, send Jim Smith in to help me and your room will be done up to-day," Maggie said.

"That must be the door bell, and to think I have been so busy this morning that I have not had time to dress. Go down and answer the bell, and if it is anyone inquiring for me please tell them to wait, for I never can appear in this dress," she exclaimed.

When Maggie opened the door she saw a man of rather stern features, who inquired for Mrs-Brown and wished to know if she was home "Faith, she is, sir," Maggie answered. "Come in, sir, and please wait until my mistress comes

down. What name shall I say, sir?"

"Never mind the name, my good girl," the stranger replied in his blunt manner. "Your mistress will know me very well when she comes down to meet me."

When Maggie went upstairs again her mistress

inquired:

"Who was it that rang the bell?"

"Shure, mistress, he bid me tell you 'that you would know him well enough when you met him,' "Maggie answered.

"I do wonder who would dare send me such a message as that," Mrs. Brown angrily exclaimed.

When the proud mistress entered the magnificent parlor she found herself face to face with the man she hated.

"Dr. Smith, your presence is no longer needed," she said with a haughy sneer.

"I knew that many hours ago," the old physician

replied.

"May I ask who it was that took the trouble to

inform you?"

"Well, madam, when I learned that you had turned your daughter out of her own home to die in a pest hospital, I well knew that my visits here were at an end. Why in Heaven's name could you not have let your daughter die in peace in her own home, if die she must," he said.

"I should like to know what right you have to come here and question my actions. Are you sure that my daughter has been taken to the pest hospital? Perhaps you may have made a mistake, as you make such things in a great many cases," she

said angrily.

"No, madam, I have made no mistake in this matter. Although you have thought to cover up your night's work well, you have failed, and this town is ringing with your cruelty," he said.

"What care I for the opinions of the common

herd," she exclaimed.

"Madam, the poorest and meanest woman in this town would not be guilty of such an act of cruelty as you have been," the old doctor answered.

"I did what was right and just," she said.

"No, madam, you have done a great injustice to your own child, and your actions have caused injustice to be done to another person also," he said.

"Why are you talking to me in such a manner?"

she asked. "I wish you to explain."

"Well, madam, you will hear it all too soon, although you are in such haste to have me enlighten you upon this unpleasant subject. You will have to answer for the death of Frank Carr, madam," he exclaimed.

"Dr. Smith, I think you have surely taken leave

of your senses," she said in surprise.

"No, madam, I am perfectly sane," the old doctor replied.

"Then why have you brought the name of that

crazy creature into this conversation?"

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"You would make a very good actress, but you cannot bluff this old man. I am well aware of your night's work. You made that poor, simple creature come here and cart your daughter from

this door—something that no one in this town would consent to do for you, with all your money. You made him cart your daughter from this door to die alone in a pest hospital, unless the Lord allows her to live and be a warning to you for this awful night's work. Frank Carr has caught the smallpox and his life is almost at an end. Poor and alone, you chose him to do the cruel work which is to be paid for with his life. What a soulful of remorse yours must be, woman!" he said.

"If you think your words can make any impression upon me you are mistaken, for I care not one iota for them. And as to that crazy creature, he would have taken the smallpox anyway," she said with a sneer.

"No, madam, Frank Carr would have been well now had you not made a tool of him to accomplish your own selfish ends," he replied.

"Have they taken him to the pest hospital?" she

asked.

"No, madam. Although he is but a poor simple outcast, he has met with more kindness than your poor daughter. He shall not die friendless and alone. The same kind-hearted person who shared your daughter's journey to the hospital is the one who will close poor, simple Frank Carr's eyes in death. You see, proud woman, that there are still some people in this world who have love and charity in their hearts for those who are friendless and alone, although they are not clad in purple and fine linen," he said.

"Pray, sir, to whom may it be that I am indebted

for such kindness?" she asked in surprise, as she haughtily threw back her head.

"Madam, it is poor old Kate," he answered.
"I knew it was some poor fool," the proud, hard-

hearted woman sneered.

"I find that, unlike you, she is a woman with a heart in her breast, even if she is poor and of the common herd. And now, as you have had to bear my hateful presence so long, I shall leave you, but I think that you are in duty bound to bury poor Frank Carr," he said.

"What do you think I am, Dr. Smith? I will have you know that I am no such fool as to do

anything of the kind, sir."

"Madam, do you not really think that you owe him that much, when by your own act that poor, simple boy has met his doom," the doctor said.

"I do not feel that I owe that wretch anything.
I have paid him well for everything he has ever

done for me," she said.

"Then, madam, I am to conclude that this interview is at an end. And for the sake of a few dollars yours shall not be the hand to save him from the 'potter's field.'"

"That, sir, is what you are to conclude."

"Woman, do you ever think that you will be called upon to meet a just God?" he asked in amazement.

"When, may I inquire, did you become a preacher?" she asked banteringly in return.

"I am afraid that your pride will have a dreadful

end," the old physician replied.

"I do not think that I should care to have you

present when such a dreadful calamity occurs,"

she sneeringly said.

"Madam, it is more than useless for me to talk to you; but, remember, I hold you as being the cause of Frank Carr's death, and if your daughter dies her death is at your hands also," he excitedly exclaimed.

"Phew, what an excellent preacher you would make. Dr. Smith, I really think that you have made a very great mistake in your calling. You certainly should be a preacher instead of a phy-

sician."

"Madam, I sincerely hope that I shall never again meet another woman who is as cruel and heartless as you," he said as he took up his hat and left.

CHAPTER XIV.

"JAMES, you have had a cold drive to the post office, this morning."

"Yes, Miss Bella," the servant answered.

"Whom did you see at Carstein's?"

"There was no one there, Miss Bella, but Ruth, and I gave your note to her. She told me that none of the family had come downstairs, but that Miss Violet would send you a reply."

"Why, James, what time was it when you

reached there?" Bella asked.

"It was just nine, Miss Bella," James answered.
"That is very strange. They never have break-

fast later than half-past eight."

"They had quite a number of guests from New York last night, and I suppose that is why they are late this morning."

"You may go now, James," she said as she sorted out the letters he had just brought in. "Here

is a letter for you, Mary, dear."

"My dear friends, I shall have to request a favor of you. I have just had a letter from mother, telling me that an epidemic of smallpox has broken out in our town."

"Mary, you surely are not going home then," Bella exclaimed. "We could not let you think of such a thing while that terrible disease is there."

"That is just what I wish to speak of. Mother would like me to stay here until it is stamped out; that is, if it would not be intruding upon your good nature," Mary replied.

"Miss Brown, it will afford us great pleasure to

have you," Mrs. Brointon answered.

"Oh, mamma, isn't that lovely. Now I will have Mary here for my birthday party, and how surprised Harry will be to hear that you are going to stay," Bella delightedly exclaimed.

"I suppose your sisters have left town?"

"Yes, mother tells me that they have gone, but that the boys would not hear of such a thing as leaving home. Father has gone away to look after some business affair and I hardly know how mother will manage all alone."

"Let us hope, Miss Brown, that it will not be so bad as it appears at present," her kind hostess said. bad as it appears at present," her kind hostess

said.

CHAPTER XV.

WHEN Mrs. Brown found herself free from the presence of the family doctor her thoughts were far from pleasant.

"You have finished the room, Maggie?"

"I have that, mum."

"Then you may clean the silver," said Mrs. Brown.

"Before I begin, ma'am, I would like to know if you think that all the work of this house can be done by one pair of hands."

"Certainly. One good woman could do all the

work of my house and have time to spare."

"Well, if you really do believe any such thing, I may as well tell you as send word, mistress, that Maggie Burke is not the woman you are wantin'."

"Do you mean to tell me that you cannot do the work of this house, Maggie?" her mistress asked

in surprise.

"Faith, ma'am, phwat I said is the plain truth. I would no more undertake to do it than I would take a bad husband for life, Mrs. Brown. So I may as well go upstairs and pack up my duds and be going back."

"Maggie, if you think that you really cannot

do this work alone I will get someone to help you," Mrs. Brown said.

"Faith, mistress, two good women, and sthrong at that, would not be too many to do the work of

this house."

"I will make inquiry, Maggie, so you can start in and clean the silver, and you will have a girl to help you as soon as I can find someone suitable," she said as she dismissed her from her presence.

"How foolish I have been to give in to that girl's whim," she thought after the servant had

gone.

"I say, Tom, let us go into the house. Father has just returned and he is sure to have brought something for us."

"All right, Harold."

"Well, boys, where have you been?"

"Out in the stable, father," Harold answered.

"How did you enjoy your trip, father?"

"I found it rather cold," he answered, "but I have not forgotten you boys. Tom, I have brought you a fine chestnut hunter."

"Hurrah! That's what I've wanted for a long

while!" Tom exclaimed in glee.

"Harold, I have not forgotten you either," Mr.

Brown said.

"Oh, Tom, isn't it a beauty," said Harold as his father gave him a gold watch.

"Your watch won't compare with my hunter."
"Oh, you will soon get tired of your hunter, but

I shall never tire of this watch."

"Where are the girls? I have some presents for them too."

"They have gone to Aunt Kate's to stay until the smallpox is over," replied Tom.

"What did you say, Tom?"

"Why, father, have you heard nothing of this? It broke out the week you left home."

"Your information is a surprise to me," his

father said.

"Come on, Tom, and I will help you fix up your 'skate,' then we will take a spin on the ice," said Harold.

Just then Maggie entered and seeing Mr. Brown, said:

"Well, shure, sir, I suppose you are the master."

"Yes, I believe I am."

"Thin, faith, I shall bring you in something to eat in a minute."

"Just a cup of hot coffee, if you please," he

answered.

"I wonder why I find a servant here? Lettie would never hear of any stranger doing her work," thought John Brown as Maggie appeared with his cup of coffee.

"Will you kindly tell Mrs. Brown that her hus-

band has returned?" he requested.

After waiting about ten minutes his wife came into the dining room.

"Well, John, when did you come?" she asked.

"I have been home for more than an hour, Lettie."

"How did you settle the business affair you

went to see about?"

"I have settled everything to my liking, Lettie," he answered.

"I am so glad you did not have all your trouble for nothing."

"Lettie, what is this I hear about the small-

pox? Are there many cases in the town?"

"Twenty cases, all told, and there have been five deaths since the disease first appeared," Mrs. Brown answered, and turned to leave.

"Come, Lettie, take this chair and let me have your company until I have finished my lunch.

I have a great many questions to ask you."

"They are not so important that you cannot wait until I have more leisure time than I have at present," snapped Mrs. Brown. "I have an engagement with my dressmaker which I cannot neglect."

"Lettie, you try my patience. You always find time for everyone but those of your own house."

"You may just as well keep your temper. No one minds it less than I," she answered as she sailed out of the room.

"Wait a minute and answer one question."

"What is it? John, you are really tiresome. Don't keep me waiting. You know I do not like to be disappointed in any of my engagements," she said and a frown marred the beauty of her brow.

"Where is Hettie? I have not seen her since I returned, and why do I find a strange servant girl in our kitchen? Who is she, Lettie?"

"Her name is Maggie Burke and she is a cousin

of Jim Smith's."

"I suppose she came well recommended, when you chose to have her do your work," her husband said.

"I think she will make a good servant after a great deal of showing, but it is hard to undertake such a task."

"Now, wife, I have heard all about your new servant, let me hear where Hettie has gone, for I know she was greatly in need of a long holiday," he said as he pushed his chair from the table.

"John, if you really must know where she is, I have had her taken to the pest hospital, for I knew it would ruin our business to have her here

with the smallpox."

"My God! Lettie, do you mean to tell me that Hettie has been stricken with that awful disease! Why have you sent my darling to the pest hospital? What is all my money to the life of my poor Hettie? Why have you acted in this manner, Lettie? Why in Heaven's name has Dr. Smith allowed this thing to be done? He knew well that had I been present I would never have given my consent. Oh! Why, in God's name, Lettie, have you stood by and let this thing be done? Why, I demand, have you ever let such a thing as this be done?"

"I suppose it was because I have a little more sense than you have, for I think that the pest hospital is the proper place for all such cases," an-

swered the cruel woman.

"Lettie, leave my presence before I am tempted to strike you," he commanded angrily. "Poor Hettie! To think you have been turned from your own father's door. Oh, God! I believe I am going mad," he cried as he laid his head upon his arms and gave vent to his awful sorrow.

Lettie Brown looked down upon her husband's

grief without one pang of remorse. She looked, as she stood in her handsome dining room, amid the sparkling cut glass and shining silver, more like some beautiful marble image than a woman with a human heart within her breast.

Her husband raised his head from the table and he looked like one almost bereft of reason. He left the room hastily and went to his well-stocked stables, where he ordered Jim Smith to make

ready his fleetest horse.

"In God's name, master, what has come over

you? Are you ill, sir?"

"No, Jim, I am not ill, but my heart is broken,"

he answered.

"Master, you are too ill to drive Spitfire to-day. She has not been driven since you left home and you know what that means. Let me give you Bess," pleaded Jim.

"For God's sake, man, do my bidding. Do not keep me waiting. Make haste and let me be off

on my sad errand," his master commanded.

"All is ready, master, but I shall be worried until

you return."

Jim's words fell upon deaf ears. His master jumped into his carriage and was off without a moment's delay.

"Och, Maggie, what has ever happened to the

master?"

"Shure, Jim, I believe Mr. Brown is going crazy. I never did see such a change take place in anyone as has been made in the master. Och, Jim, you should have seen him, poor man, when that hardhearted woman told him that she had sent her

daughter to a pest hospital. I was shure that he

was going to drop down dead at her feet."

"Why, Maggie, shure and what is this you are trying to tell me? I believe you have taken leave of your reason, too. What has ever flown over this house? What would the mistress ever send her daughter to the hospital for?"

"Shure, Jim, poor Miss Hettie was stricken

down with the smallpox," Maggie exclaimed.

"Och, Maggie, for the love of Heaven, has the loike of that befell poor Miss Hettie? How do

you know this is true?"

"Shure, wasn't I cleaning up the silver in the pantry off the dining room when the master came home and I had just got him a bite of lunch, poor man, when he bid me let the mistress know that he had returned. When I come back to finish my work in the pantry—but, faith, Jim, the mistress never knew I was there—I heard the mistress telling the poor man."

"Shure, that woman fears neither God nor the devil. Of that I am sure after what I have just heard. Maggie, do you know that is why the mistress set up to work to clean that room? That is why we had to pull off all that beautiful paper. Thank God, I am not afeared of getting the smallpox. I would have nursed the poor dear myself."

"Oh, but I do pity the poor master this day!" Maggie exclaimed as she took up the corner of her

apron to wipe her eyes.

"Shure, Maggie, I just wish the master were safe home. He said he was not ill, but his heart was broken."

"Och, Jim, this blow is enough to kill him, poor

man. I shall just give him a glass of good liquor when he gets home, for there is plenty of it in the dining room."

"Shure, Maggie, the master never tastes a drop of anything, although he has been in the business

so long," Jim replied.

"Oh, but, Jim, a glass would do him good after

all this awful trouble."

"Faith, Maggie, I don't think the master will have any, no matter how great his trouble is."

"Well, Jim, I can tell you that his son Tom will be able to drink his father's share of it. I wish you could see him in the dining room helping himself."

"Oh, Maggie, dear, that is nothing new, for Master Tom has been a taster for many a day," he said.

"Shure, he is the foine good-hearted lad, for all he loikes the drop," Maggie said.

"Here is the master at home once more, Jim,"

said Maggie.

"Never bother him. He has trouble enough,

poor man."

"All right, Jim. I only wish I could be of help to him, poor man," Maggie said as Jim left the kitchen to take his master's horse, which was covered with foam.

John Brown had driven his horse with the speed of the wind until he reached the pest hospital, only to meet with a disappointment.

"Doctor, may I see a patient who was brought

here from the town of C-?"

"I am sorry I cannot let you in, sir, but it is

strictly forbidden to allow anyone inside the wards."

"Oh, God, isn't this awful!" he exclaimed.

"Is the young lady a relative?" the doctor asked. "She is my daughter, sir," he replied in an unsteady voice.

"Well, the only thing you can do, sir, is to

leave money to alleviate her sufferings."

"Do you mean to tell me, sir, that my daughter is in the charity ward of this hospital?"

"I believe that such is the case," the doctor an-

swered.

"My God! Is my misery never to end? Here, sir, take this money and let my daughter want for

nothing that money can secure for her."

"Very well, Mr. Brown, your orders will receive strict attention," replied the doctor, as Mr. Brown turned to leave the hospital for his home, a changed man to what he had been a few short hours ago.

As he walked through the rooms of his magnificent home, the splendor and glitter seemed to rise up and mock him. What had all his wealth brought him? He could picture his daughter rolling and tossing upon her bed of misery, calling for water to quench her burning thirst, and no kind voice or loving hand to answer her call. Oh, God, how awful was the sorrow that filled his heart. Great was the remorse that filled his soul; but none pity that sorrow-stricken man in his own grand home, for he had found his cold, proud wife to be without love or charity in her heart to those she owed a mother's love.

The days passed by and each found the breach made wider between husband and wife. He found no pleasure but in the care of his business. His soul was given up to the one thought, that of making money. He found nothing to live for after he had found how cruel and heartless his wife had been to their own daughter in her hour of need. Everything he touched appeared to turn to gold, but withal it brought no happiness to his unhappy home. Happier far was the poorest man within the town of C--- than he with all his wealth and show. It mattered not where he chanced to go his daughter's voice seemed to haunt him. Only to have her in his home again and to hear her sweet voice and see her gliding through the rooms, as was her habit, and to hear her singing as she went about her work, how happy he would be! Such were his thoughts during Hettie's stay in the pest hospital, which seemed years to the heart-broken father who loved her so dearly. "Will the time never come again when I can clasp my darling to my heart?" he would cry.

CHAPTER XVI.

ONE day late in August a stranger alighted from

a railroad coach at the station of C---.

Many were the remarks passed concerning the stranger's appearance, for the station of C—was a country place, where there are always a number of idle persons to be found, and they never fail to make remarks concerning each newcomer.

Some wondered who the stranger could be, while there were others who wondered where he was

bound for.

Jim Smith happened to be waiting at the station to take some visitors to his master's home when some of the idlers stepped up to the carriage and asked Jim what he thought of the stranger who had given them a surprise in alighting at the town of C——

"Well, shure, boys, I will have to get a look at the stranger before I can pass any opinion upon him," Jim said, much to the surprise of all.

The stranger turned around and looked at Jim Smith, who took off his hat and made a most respectful bow.

"Oh, don't you know a gintleman when you

see one, boys?" he asked in delight.

"Well, Jim, you appear to know him by the way you took off that hat. Why, you never made such a bow to your proud, haughty mistress, Jim," they said. "Come, let us know who he is."

"He is a priest, and a fine looking one at that. Did you ever see such a fine pair of shoulders, boys, and such a handsome face?" Jim asked, as the crowd of men looked upon the stranger, who stood upon the platform as though he were wait-

ing for someone to meet him.

But if such were the case he looked in vain, for no one advanced to bid him a welcome. He looked around and took in the rustic beauty of the hills. When he turned his head to the north his eyes rested upon the gilded cross of the tall church spire of St. Mary's, towering high above the lofty forest trees; he also noted the tall marble shafts denoting the churchyard, where many loved ones had been laid to rest.

He wiped his noble brow and taking up his baggage wended his way down the dusty country road where he came upon some children playing and stopped to talk to them. They were busy sailing pieces of wood down the clear running stream that found its way through the town of C——. They watched the wood sail down the stream until it was lost from their view under the heavy stone arches of the bridge which spanned the creek. The handsome stranger heaved a sigh and the children looked at him in surprise.

"How happy, children, would it be if you could spend your lives always in your childish glee, but far too soon your young lives shall know the troubles of this sinful world and all your happy childhood pass away as these very sticks of wood are doing in floating down the stream," the stranger said.

The children laughed at the stranger's words, but well he knew that they did not understand

him.

He had been so interested in their happy time that he was surprised when he heard the angelus bell strike the hour of six. He bade them good night and hastened on his way. As he reached the summit of the hill the sun was sinking in all its crimson glory. When he at last reached the rectory door he rang the bell, which was answered by a neat servant girl. He asked to see the Reverend Father Malone. The servant bid the stranger enter and she led him into a long room, facing the west, and which commanded a splendid view of the surrounding country.

He was so lost in admiration of the magnificent scenery that he failed to hear the door open, and gazed out of the window until he heard his name uttered by a deep, well modulated voice. He turned to greet the Reverend Father Malone and saw before him a man who was about five and fifty, with a form as straight as a sapling and a pair of gray eyes that lighted up his pale features, while his snow-white hair was brushed high off his noble

brow.

The Reverend Father Malone greeted the young clergyman very warmly and told him that he hoped he would find his labors as an assistant congenial to him, then rang the bell and told the servant to show the Reverend James Loftion to his room, saying:

"I know you will enjoy a refreshing bath after

your long dusty walk from the station."

Later in the evening he went in search of Father Malone, to be instructed in his new duties as curate of St. Mary's Church. After he had received his instructions he started out to explore the church-yard and its surroundings. The church and rectory of St. Mary's was built upon a high hill and shaded by many lofty forest trees. It commanded an excellent view of the country for many miles. Father Loftion went from grave to grave reading upon the tomb stones the names of the faithful, long gone to give an account of their stewardship.

The young priest wondered as he walked through the churchyard if it would be a large gathering of people that would be present on the morrow to

hear the sermon he had prepared.

At last the sun of the Sabbath day rose high in the heavens, but the zealous young priest met with a surprise, for he found many empty pews in St. Mary's church that beautiful Sabbath day. He wondered if there were any who would choose a more beautiful place in which to give thanks to their Creator than this grand old church.

Father Loftion greatly disliked to have people coming in and going out of the church during mass, and he found it a source of annoyance the first Sunday he spent at St. Mary's. He requested the congregation to come to the services early and not be coming in after mass had commenced. He thought that was one of the grossest insults that anyone could offer to the Lord of Hosts, always present, after which he preached

one of the grandest sermons ever heard in St. Mary's, for God had endowed Father Loftion with an eloquence rarely met with. As his text he took:

"The Lord saith, I think thoughts of peace and not of affliction. You shall call upon me and I shall hear you; and I will bring you back from your captivity from all places."—Lu. xxix. 11, 12, 14.

"Lord, thou hast blessed the land, Thou has turned away the captivity of Jacob."—Ps. xxxiv.

Father Loftion's sermon brought tears to the eyes of his hearers. He held them spellbound by his eloquence. Many hearts were moved that Sabbath that had been cold and indifferent for years.

"Well, Father Loftion, what have you to say in regard to the members of your new charge?" the Reverend Father Malone inquired as they sat

down to dinner.

"Father, I was greatly surprised to find so few people present at the masses this morning. Why have we had so few present on this beautiful morning? Is there any other place of worship that they can attend?" the young clergyman asked.

"No, no other place within twelve miles of St. Mary's. It gives me great pain to have to confess that it is due to the coldness and indifference of our congregation that you find so few people present, and as my health has been failing fast of late I have not the rallying force to bring together those who should set a brighter example to their fellow creatures. I hope God has sent me one who will help me bring back these erring

ones to the path that their footsteps have not trodden for so long, but you shall soon know all our flock. I will have the sexton go around with you during the coming week, so that you may know them."

"Thank you, Father Malone, I shall be glad to make myself known among our congregation," the young clergyman replied as they arose from

the table.

He went to his room and returned with his book in his hand. When he left the house to say his office he went into the churchyard and came upon a path that led him into a beautiful meadow, divided by a creek and bordered on both sides by beautiful willow trees. He looked around and found a beautiful seat, formed by nature's own handiwork from the trunk of a wild grape Father Loftion sprang into the seat and was soon lost in his devotions, but, happening to raise his eyes, he was greatly surprised to see before him in the meadow a group of men, some old and some young. They seemed to be having a very interesting game of cards. The young clergyman put his hands to his eyes to make sure that he had made no mistake when he had seen the money changed hands and the liquor passed around.

With the bound of a deer the young priest found himself in the presence of the gamesters, much to their chagrin. He exclaimed angrily:

"Are you men or are you devils to desecrate the Sabbath in this awful manner? Shame upon your manhood. Hand me that bottle," and upon receiving it he dashed it upon a rock. "That is where your immortal souls will go if you persist in your sinfulness," he said.

So great was their surprise that they could

find no voice to answer him.

"Come one and all of you and let me have your names," he demanded, as he drew his notebook from his pocket, when from among the group of men stepped one whose once manly features were besotted by the curse of run. taking his name, Father Loftion said:

"Philip Burns, what an example you should be to all who look upon your shattered frame. Take heed, Philip Burns, before it is too late to mend your illspent life. Remember that the

wages of sin is death."

Calling a beardless youth to his side he demanded his name.

"Tom Brown, sir."

"How old are you?"
"Twenty-two," Tom replied.

"Have you no parents?" Father Loftion asked.

"Yes!" replied Tom.

"Then why in Heaven's name have you been allowed to sink so far in sin? Young man, is there no restraining hand to hold you in check? And a Catholic! What a disgrace to the dear faith you profess."

After taking the names of all of the group, Father Loftion dismissed them but not until he had extracted from each one a promise that they would meet him in the church on Monday evening.

They left the young priest's presence with downcast looks, and after they had all gone from the meadow he fell upon his knees and begged of God to be merciful to those who had trampled His image and likeness in the dust, and leaving the beautiful meadow the young priest turned his steps toward the rectory with a sad and heavy heart.

"Well, boys, did you ever see such courage as that young priest displayed? I believe he would fear nothing if he was sure he was in the right," Tom Brown exclaimed.

"I suppose we will have to show up to-morrow night. I know that I, for one, would not like to

go back on a promise," Philip Burns said.

"I hope this thing will not get spread around the town, for it would surely cause us to be laughed at," Tom said. "We will meet at the bridge to-morrow night, fellows, and then we'll find out what is in store for us; but of course you fellows who do not belong to our faith will never keep the promise you made to Father Loftion."

"Why!" they answered, "we would not think of breaking our word. We are sure to hear something that we don't hear every day."

"You can all please yourselves, but I wish I had half your chance to back out," Tom exclaimed.

"Surely, Tom, you are not going to show the white feather?" his companions asked.

"No," he replied, "for I am sure to have plenty of company if you all show up."

They bade each other "good-bye," and then

went their different ways.

Monday evening arrived and Father Loftion stood waiting in the dim vestibule of the church to meet the group of men he had so suddenly surprised in the meadow. He soon heard their footsteps as they came up the path, and after they had all responded to their names he led them into the grand old church, which many in that group of men had not entered for years. Then he ascended the steps of the altar and gave voice to one of the grandest temperance sermons that ever fell from the lips of a gifted orator. After he finished the sermon he stepped down from the altar and invited his hearers to come forward and sign the temperance pledge, which they all did, and that night the corner stone was laid for one of the greatest temperance societies to be found within miles of St. Mary's.

Many were the voices raised to God to bless the young priest's good and noble work. Many were the desolate homes and broken hearts that were made happy by Father Loftion's temperance

society and its pledge.

The young clergyman, embracing the opportunity thus offered of making himself known to the members of his flock, soon found himself in the home of Tom Brown, where he asked to see the parents of the young man he had already met.

Maggie Burke hastened to tell her proud mistress that the new clergyman was waiting in the drawing room to see her.

"Did you tell him I was at home, Maggie?"

her mistress asked.

"Faith, I did. What else would you have me tell him?"

"How stupid of you. It is impossible for me to see him. I have an engagement at three to go

for a drive. You must go down and tell him I

am not at home," her mistress said.

"Faith, I'll not do anything of the kind. I did not hire with you to tell your lies," Maggie replied.

"I really have a mind to dismiss you from my service. I never had such a servant. Go at once

and leave me."

Maggie returned to the drawing room and told the young clergyman that her mistress had refused, to see him, when he asked:

"Is there any of the family at home?"

"No, father, they are all away to-day. I wish poor Miss Hettie were here, for I know she will be greatly vexed when she hears that you have

called and found her away from home."

"Well never mind, I shall call again soon and then, perhaps, I shall find some one at home," saying which he took up his hat and gloves and left the splendid home of Lettie Brown to visit many humbler ones, but where he received more respect than he had found in the home of the proud Mrs. Brown.

When he reached the home of Philip Burns he was greeted in a fitting manner. Philip Burns' wife and daughter shed tears of joy in his presence and thanked him again and again for the great good his act had secured for them, by saving a husband and father from a living death.

V Marie C. Marie .

CHAPTER XVII.

THE weeks passed slowly and at last Hettie Brown was free to leave the pest hospital for her own home. Hettie's heart was filled with joy when she thought of the welcome she would receive after her recovery from her long illness and her return She longed to feel her mother's kiss and hear her words of welcome, for she loved her mother dearly, even though she had never known one kind or loving word to fall from that woman's Hettie thought that when her proud parent should look upon her poor scarred features and see all her magnificent hair shorn from her head surely her mother's heart would be moved with pity, if not love, and she impatiently awaited her father's coming. The nurse at last came and told her that her father was waiting to take her home.

Hettie left the room with a fast beating heart. When she reached her father's side she threw her arms around his neck and wept tears of bitter sorrow, to see such a change in him. Little she knew how much he had suffered.

"Father, have you been ill?"

"No, Hettie, dear, not ill, but do not weep so. You cannot know how glad I am to take you home with me to-day. You should be happy, darling, not sad. Come, dry those tears and let me see you smile after all you have suffered."

"Father, it is through your own generosity that

I am able to leave this place."

"Hettie, dear, my hand was not the one that sent you here. Oh, God! If I could only forget it all."

"Father, think not of all the trouble I have caused you. I know it will be hard for you to look upon my altered face and forget what it once was."

"Hettie, dear, your poor scarred face will make me love you more than ever, for I know you have suffered more than you can ever tell. To think you should receive such cruel treatment from those who should love and protect you."

"Father, dear, do not speak of it, for mother has

ways that no one can change."

"My dear child, I only wish it were in my power

to forget it all, but that is impossible."

"You must not think of the past. You must try to forget it all. It gives me great pain to know that you are cast down by such thoughts," Hettie said.

John Brown's carriage drove up to his door, where he and Hettie alighted, and Hettie again entered the home from which she had been so cruelly driven by her proud mother's hand. She at once went into the magnificent dining room, in hope that she would receive the welcome she had

been longing for so many weeks, but her hopes were in vain, for her mother was not present at the supper table. But if Hettie was sad and disappointed when she discovered her mother's chair vacant, she was fully repaid by the welcome she received from the family present. Tom gave a shout of joy and all came forward to give her a joyful welcome.

"Run, Tom, and bring Maggie Burke in!" Nellie exclaimed, "so that she may welcome Hettie home."

Tom started to leave the room just as Maggie entered.

"I was just going to the kitchen for you," said Tom.

"Well, Master Tom, what do you be after wanting now?" Maggie inquired.

"We want you to welcome Hettie home."

"Och, shure it will be meself that will enjoy the pleasure of doing the loike," Maggie answered.

"Come, Hettie, out of that corner and let Maggie

bid you welcome."

Hettie advanced to the center of the room to meet her mother's newservant, and the honest heart of Maggie Burke went out to the poor girl. She threw her stout arms around Hettie and bade her a true and loving welcome back to her own fine home.

"Where is mother?" she at last found voice to ask of Tom.

"She has gone to the city with Mrs. Penrose, and they are not coming home until late this evening. It is some swell gathering of mother's set," Tom replied.

"Come, Miss Hettie, let me help you off with your wraps."

"Never mind, Maggie, dear, I can do very well myself," she answered as she left the dining room.

When she found herself alone in her own room her heart was heavy with sorrow. To think she should find her lady mother from home on her return.

"I am sure to see mother at the breakfast table and I know she will then welcome me home," thought Hettie.

"May I enter?"

"Yes, Agnes, I am waiting for you," Hettie re-

plied.

"How glad I am to have you home with us again. We have felt your absence very much. How do you like Maggie?"

"Maggie Burke has a good true heart, I think, but I suppose you have a great deal to tell me of

this new servant."

"Why, Hettie, we have two girls now. Maggie gave mamma to understand that she would not stay unless there was another woman brought in to help her do the work. You should just hear how Maggie talks to mamma. She is not one least bit afraid and mamma takes it all. We cannot understand how Maggie managed to keep her position so long."

"Maggie must be a very good servant when mother allows her to be so impertinent," Hettie an-

swered.

"She is an excellant servant, Hettie, but mamma has to stay out of the kitchen, for Maggie will not have her come into it. You will be surprised when you see all the changes that have taken place

during your absence."

When Hettie entered the long, handsome dining room she found her mother was not yet downstairs. Five minutes passed before her mother made her appearance. She was clad in a beautiful gown of rich red merino, trimmed with great billows of black lace. Crossing the room she took her chair at the table, but did not deign to notice Hettie's presence.

"Did you have a nice time at the luncheon yes-

terday?" Agnes inquired.

"Yes, a very pleasant one," her mother replied. They finished the meal in silence, and, mastering the lump which had risen in her throat, Hettie ventured to inquire in a low, sad voice after her mother's health, but she received no reply.

Leaving the woman's presence with her loving heart bleeding from the rebuke she had received, she checked her tears until she reached the solitude of her own room, where she locked the door and sank upon her pillow to cry until she thought

her aching heart must burst.

Hark! Was that a knock at her door? How could she allow anyone to see her grief. No, she could not open her door, such were her thoughts. Hearing a voice pleading with her to open the door, she relented, and drying her tear-stained face went to the door, to find herself face to face with the noble-hearted Maggie Burke.

"Faith, I knew I would find you, poor child, up here crying your pretty eyes out. Come, Miss Hettie, let me share your sorrow, for shure it is

Maggie Burke who knows your secret."

Hettie found the time pass slowly after she returned from the hospital. It was a most trying time to her poor heart, for though her proud mother grew more cold and haughty day by day, yet Hettie found it hard to conceal the love she still had for her.

John Brown knew how devoid his wife was of mother love and he tried in a great measure to make up for her shortcomings to his daughter, but his time meant money, and consequently Hettie was very little in her kind father's company, although the love he bestowed upon her when they were together helped to fill the deep gulf in her lonely heart.

One day, after she had been home from the hospital for a number of weeks, Tom came into the

sitting room where Hettie was sewing.

"Well, sis, have you heard the news this morning?"

"Is it pleasant or sad?"

"I suppose you will say it is very sad news."
"Do not keep me in suspense, then. Let me know what it is."

"Well, Frank Burns' mother has been stricken

with the smallpox."

"Oh, Tom, I thought that dreadful disease had been stamped out of the town."

"I just heard the men speak of it in the bar-

room," Tom replied.

Going to her room, Hettie made up a small bundle of clothing that she would be likely to need and, putting on her wraps, went down into the kitchen in search of Maggie Burke, who had been her true friend in her darkest hour of need. "Shure, Miss Hettie, are you going out to get your death of cold in such weather as this is to-

day!" Maggie exclaimed.

"Yes, Maggie, I am going away from home for a short time. I find my presence here is of no use, so please tell father that I have gone upon a little trip."

"Shure, Miss Hettie, it will be meself that will miss you in this house. I hope you will not stay long, for nothing will go right while you are

away."

"Maggie, I will miss you, too, but I hope it will

not be long until I return again."

"Och, Miss Hettie, you would make me believe I had done something great for you, the way you

speak of me."

"Maggie, you will never understand what a great kindness you have done by giving me your friendship," Hettie replied as she kissed Maggie goodbye and hastened on her way to do an act of

mercy.

It was a very wet, miserable day. The sky was overcast with heavy clouds as Hettie hurried on her way through the town of C——. After an hour's walk she found herself at Philip Burns' door. Her heart was beating rapidly as she gave a timid knock upon the door, but when the kind hand of Dr. Smith opened the door, she found no trouble in walking into Philip Burns' home, where her presence had never been known before. The old doctor gave her a warm welcome. It was the first time he had seen her since her recovery.

"I have heard that Mrs. Burns is ill and I have

come to nurse her."

"My dear child, do you not think that such a step will cause your proud lady mother to be very angry with you—leaving your own grand home to come here to nurse this poor, sick woman. Think well of the step you have taken, dear child, for you know your mother is a very unforgiving woman."

"Dr. Smith, you need have no fear on my account, as I find my presence a source of discomfort to my mother since my illness, and I do hope that you are not going to send me home again when I could find so much happiness in nursing this woman who needs me," Hettie said, with a tear

upon her silken lashes.

"God bless you, Hettie Brown, for a noble woman. You almost make me forget that you are the daughter of that vain, haughty lady," he said as he instructed her in her new duties. "God help that poor child. She is almost heartbroken over her poor mother's illness. You must try to cheer her up, Hettie, and if Philip Burns should happen to come home intoxicated you must not get frightened, for he is not quarrelsome, but I think it best for you to be prepared. This will be a heavy blow to Philip and he is likely to fly to rum to forget his troubles. Annie Burns has been a faithful wife to him, and it will be no surprise if Philip breaks his pledge. They have known the sting of the curse of rum. Now, Hettie, I must hasten on my way, as I have a number of calls to make this evening but I will be here in the morning," he said.

After the kind old doctor had gone, Hettie found herself alone in the neat and cheerful sitting

room. When Katie came downstairs she looked in surprise to see Hettie Brown in her humble home.

"Good afternoon, Miss Brown. What do you wish?" she inquired.

"I have come here, Miss Burns, to help you nurse

your sick mother."

"I am sorry, but I could not think of letting you do so."

"Do you mean to refuse me this first and only

favor I have ever requested of you?"

"Had it been anything else but what you have requested of me, Miss Brown, I would gladly grant your request, but you know you are an entire stranger to us."

"Then I am to infer that you do not care for my friendship, Miss Burns, having refused to grant

my request."

"If I could see how such an act could benefit you, Miss Brown, I would surely grant your request, but I cannot see how it would help you in any way."

"Oh, Miss Burns, you cannot know what hap-

piness it would give me."

"If you really wish it, you may stay and share

our humble lot," Katie answered.

"Thank you ever so much. You have made my heart leap with joy by granting me this favor," Hettie exclaimed.

Katie relieved Hettie of her wraps and inquired

if she had had supper.

"No, my dear friend; I would like a cup of tea, if you please."

Katie laid the spotless cloth and soon had their

simple meal upon the table. They both sat down and then and there sealed a friendship which was never to be broken but by the hand of death.

Katie waited for her father to return from work, but she dreaded the effect the news of her mother's illness must have upon him, although he had just

signed the temperance pledge.

She had not waited long before she heard her father's steps. Hettie told him of his wife's illness and it was indeed a terrible shock to him. He walked the floor in the anguish of despair and then reaching for his coat and hat left the room, saying he must go out.

Katie felt her heart sink within her. She pleaded in vain with him to stay at home, for she

knew full well how he would return.

Philip Burns found it impossible to listen to his daughter's pleading, and left his stricken home to seek the bar of John Brown's hotel and drown his trouble in rum.

Katie waited in vain for her father to return and her heart was heavy. She would have given anything she possessed to shield her poor misguided father's weakness from the eyes of Hettie Brown, but this she found impossible, for Hettie shared her vigil.

The hour of midnight rang out from the town clock, yet Philip Burns had not returned. Katie was on the verge of despair when she at last heard her father groping for the door. She sprang from

the couch to open the door for him.

"Oh, father! Thank God you have returned!" but her father was too intoxicated to command speech to answer.

Katie led his tottering form to the couch and placed a pillow for his weary heard. She hovered about him like some ministering angel, all love and

pity for her unfortunate father.

When Philip Burns entered the room Hettie recoiled in horror to think that one of God's creatures, having an immortal soul, should ever become more degraded than a beast by rum. She had never before realized the awful nature of her father's business until she beheld the once manly form of Philip Burns now slovenly and broken down.

When she saw the sad effects of rum in Philip Burns' home she thought of her own parents' wealth, the splendid home she had just left, and shrank back as she thought that all had been gained by the downfall of their fellow creatures. Crossing the room she threw her arms around Katie's neck and shed bitter tears of sorrow.

"What is the matter?" Katie asked in alarm.

"I am so sorry to see, that through my parents' business such misery and woe must be shared by many, as I have been forced to see you suffer this

night."

"Never mind, dear girl, do not grieve so. I suppose my father's failing causes you to shrink with horror, but as it is our cross we have to bear it until God in His mercy sees fit to lift it from our shoulders."

"Oh, how much faith you have, Katie, to speak so hopefully of your greatest trial," Hettie exclaimed.

"My dear friend, do we not belong to the one fold and the one flock? Have you not also the same faith in God's great mercy?" Katie asked in surprise.

"Would to God I had," Hettie replied.

Katie was shocked to hear her answer. She thought it impossible that a Catholic could be guilty of such want of faith.

Hettie was quick to notice Katie's start of sur-

prise.

"I hope, dear friend," she said, "you will not judge me too harshly for my want of faith, but is it not said that 'as the twig is bent, so it will grow'? That is why you find my heart so cold and indifferent to the grand religion that I profess," Hettie said.

"Please do not be offended with me, but your words surprised me greatly. As to my thoughts of your want of faith, I must confess that I am truly sorry to think of the happiness you have missed."

"Well, dear Katie, I am happy now, for I have this night found in your humble home that which I have never known in my own grand home. I have found explicit trust and faith in my God and the great benefits of my religion," Hettie answered.

"Oh, how glad I am," Katie replied.

The weeks passed by and Hettie found her stay in the home of the Burns', where she had found so much happiness, drawing to a close. Mrs. Burns was now able to come downstairs, and, thanks to Hettie's loving care, had escaped without a scar.

Hettie prepared her things in order to return home and bade "good-bye" to the family of Philip Burns with regret.

"I have been so very happy here, I cannot tell

you how sorry I am to have to leave your happy home, where I have found such peace and love," she said in tears.

"Hettie, dear, I hope you will always count us as your friends, and I trust that if you ever are in need of anything that is in my own or my family's power to bestow you will never pass my door," Mrs. Burns said.

Hettie left the house of Philip Burns to return to her own grand home where all was but glitter and empty show. Her heart was filled with sorrow, for she could picture her proud mother's face

as she walked on through the town.

"Will mother never relent in her coldness to me?" she asked herself, and wondered what kind of a meeting she would have when she reached home, though she knew that she would not find such peace and love as she had left in the humble home of Philip Burns. When at length she reached her father's door she found everything in a state of bustle and confusion.

Maggie Burke met her in the hall and gave her

a warm welcome.

"Faith, Miss Hettie, you have just returned in

toime," she said.

"Why, Maggie, what does all this mean? I noticed the busy air of the house the minute I entered the door."

"Shure you never saw such a busy time as we have had here, Miss Hettie, since Tuesday. The mistress received a letter telling her that Miss Mary is to return this evening, and is to bring some fri'nds with her, so she has invited a number of

her foine fri'nds to meet them and we are to have

a big toime, shure."

"I shall go to my room then, and you need not say that I have come home again. I am very tired and do not care to meet strangers to-night."

"I shall do as you bid me, Miss Hettie, for well I know your presence would be a great displeasure to my proud mistress in her foine company to-

night," Maggie angrily replied.

"Maggie, dear, you must not speak so of my mother. You know I have spoken to you before of your conduct, and I am sorry that you have made it necessary for me to remind you of it."

"Shure, Miss Hettie, I am very sorry, but it is hard for one to hold their tongue when they see

such miserable conduct," Maggie said.

"You must try to do as I have requested you, Maggie, if you do not wish to make me feel very

unhappy."

"Faith, Miss Hettie, you know I would be the last one in the world to want to make you unhappy, but you know I am not as good as you are," Maggie answered.

"I know you do not wish to cause me pain, but you are so hasty and speak so quick. By the way, Maggie, if you should find my help of any use to you please let me know, and I will come down to help you."

"Shure, Miss Hettie," Maggie exclaimed, "not one step will you come down when there are servants paid to do the work. The mistress has hired two more servants to help us to-night, so there will be recorded from "

be no need of you."

"Very well, I shall not detain you, for I know

you must have a thousand and one things to see to when there are to be so many guests," Hettie said as she left Maggie Burke standing in the hall.

Going to her room Hettie settled herself down in her easy-chair to enjoy a quiet evening's reading. She wondered what Mary would think when she looked upon her altered face. She knew that Mary loved her, although she appeared cold and

haughty to strangers.

Hettie had not read many pages before she heard the guests arrive, and soon sounds of laughter and music reached her from her mother's parlors below. All was pleasure and mirth among Mrs. Brown's guests, yet Hettie's thoughts were not with them, but with the friends she had left at Philip Burns' happy fireside.

The clock on Hettie's mantel had just struck ten when she heard the knob of her door turn and, raising her eyes from her book to see who was about to enter her room, her gaze fell upon her sister Mary in all the radiance of a magnificent evening

dress.

When Mary Brown looked upon her sister's sadly marred face she uttered a scream and fell lifeless at Hettie's feet. Hettie worked with her for some time, and when she at last found that she had recovered from her faint left the room in haste to get some wine, for she knew that Mary must be in need of some stimulant after the shock she had just received.

Mary looked up when Hettie returned to the

room and asked in a pitiful voice:

"Why have you allowed me to remain away so long without telling me of your illness? Oh,

what a shock it was when I entered this room and

saw your face so marred."

"My dear sister, I was sure that mother had written you of my illness. Had I known that such was not the case I would have told you by my own pen. I deeply regret that I have been the cause of your being so greatly shocked tonight," Hettie replied.

"Oh, Hettie, it is terrible to think that you have been stricken with that dreadful disease and I have known nothing of it. How could mother be so cruel as not to tell me? To think I have been enjoying myself so much and you have been almost

dying with that dreaded smallpox."

"Mary, dear, I would like to have you stay and talk to me had you the time, but you have been absent from the parlor quite a while, and mother will be angry if you do not return soon. When all the company have gone, if you come here, then

I will tell you all about it."

"Oh, how under Heaven can I go back to those people after all I have suffered this night. Yet I must, just to please my proud mother's whims. And I must appear with a smiling face when my heart is as heavy as lead. Oh, Hettie, how I do hate to return to those gay people," and she stooped and kissed Hettie's poor scarred face.

"I have never seen a better hostess than your mother," Bella said as Mary returned to her mother's friends. "I have noticed that she has a grand way of doing anything, no matter how tri-

fling it may be."

"I am very sorry mother is not near enough to

hear your opinion of her, for I know she would be

greatly flattered."

Mrs. Brown's guests entered the magnificent dining room, where they found a sumptuous repast awaiting them. The room was exquisitely decorated with tree ferns and palms, while the table with its heavy silver and sparkling cut glass was banked with maidenhair fern and American beauty roses. Toasts were drunk in sparkling wines and liquors, and the room resounded with laughter and gay repartee. Mrs. Brown was in her glory, for had she not gained her way into the smart circle she had craved so long to enter!

Mary Brown was not so elated. She thought the evening would never end. All her thoughts were with her sister Hettie. Many were the questions addressed to her that she never heard. It was three o'clock before the last carriage had

driven away.

Mary went up to Bella's room, but she hoped her guest would not keep her long, and she was not disappointed, for Bella told her she was tired and needed rest. Mary bade Bella "good morning" and left the room, not to seek repose but to go to Hettie's room, where she found her sister waiting for her.

"Oh, Hettie," she said, "is it not too bad to have had you lose all this rest on my account. I thought those people would never leave. What a time I did have to get all these long weary hours passed, and I was so afraid I would come here and find

Nellie and Agnes with you."

"They do not know yet that I have come home again," Hettie answered.

"Why, where have you been?" Mary inquired in surprise.

Hettie told her of her visit to Mrs. Burns'.

Mary sat looking at her sister in amazement. Finally she arose, and, throwing her arms around Hettie's neck, exclaimed:

"Oh, Hettie, dear, how you must have suffered.

If I could have only helped you to bear it all."

"I have but one great sorrow, Mary, and it is impossible for anyone to help me bear it. If I could but make mother love me the least bit I would be happy, but her scornful looks are becoming almost unbearable."

"I wonder that you can wish anything of the kind," Mary said. "You have received so many wrongs from mother that I am surprised you do

not hate her."

"Sister, it was mother's worldly pride that wronged me so. I do not feel that from her heart she would act so toward me, and I know that what I have suffered has been for the welfare of my soul, for through my mother's coldness I have found my God," she said.

"But," Mary said, "what am I going to do? Bella is to be our guest, and it will appear so strange to her that you have been stricken with smallpox, and I never told her anything of it."

"Do not worry about that, Mary. I will make everything right, and Bella shall not see me, for I will leave home early this morning," Hettie said.

"Why, Hettie, dear, where do you mean to go

at such an early hour?" Mary asked.

"I shall go back to Mrs. Burns' home, as no

one but faithful Maggie Burke knows that I have yet returned from there."

"Oh, it is terrible to think you have to leave your own home like some hunted creature and go

among strangers."

"I must do it, for I would not care to have Bella see how coldly mother treats me, and I am sure that mother would cause a scene, for she must be very angry about my going to nurse Mrs. Burns. But, Mary, you must get some rest now. You must be very tired after all you have had to bear since last night," Hettie said as she arose from her chair preparatory to again leaving her home to seek comfort in the home of a stranger.

Lettie Brown had no cause for regret. ciety affair had passed off without one flaw. "Oh, how my friends will envy my wealth and society when they read of my success. Now I must find husbands for my daughters, and then I shall feel that I have all that one could wish for," thought the cold, proud woman of the world as she sat in her room after all her guests had departed.

Having at last decided that all the plans she had arranged were satisfactory to herself she prepared for some rest after the excitement and labor of the past few days, which she considered was well repaid by the flatteering remarks of her society

friends, whom she valued so greatly.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The weeks passed, and Bella Brointon's visit having ended, Hettie again came back to take up her place at home. The work still went on monotonously under the guidance of the exacting Mrs. Brown. Hettie found herself a still greater stranger to her mother than before, but she never complained of her conduct.

Mrs. Brown had at last found a husband for Agnes, and she meant to have nothing stand in the way of her cherished hopes. She threw Agnes continually in the way of the young man that she had selected, but Agnes little knew of her mother's

well laid plans.

Charles Penrose was the young man whom Mrs. Brown had chosen from among her circle of friends as her daughter's future husband. He was a wild young man, and with others of his set spent much of his time with cards and wine. He was but one and twenty, and having a very pleasing manner found himself the honored guest of Mrs. Brown. There he found Tom, a very good partner at billiards and cards, while he thought Agnes was a most charming hostess.

The months passed, and at length, to Mrs.

Brown's delight, Charles Penrose requested the pleasure of an interview with his proud hostess, a request that was readily granted. The servant conducted him to Mrs. Brown's presence.

"How very fortunate I am to secure a few minutes of your valuable time," he said. "I have come

to ask a great favor of you, Mrs. Brown."

"Well, Mr. Penrose," she questioned coldly, although she could hardly control her delight, "what is it, pray?"

"I have to come to ask you for your daughter's

fair hand in marriage," he answered.

"What a surprise you have given me, Mr. Penrose," she said. "May I ask of which one of my daughters you are speaking?"

"Agnes is the fair one whom I love," he an-

swered.

"You must give me time to consider your request before I can give you an answer," she said. "Have you spoken to Agnes of this matter?"

"I thought it best to get your kind permission

before I spoke to her," he naïvely replied.

"I am glad you have used so much discretion, for Agnes is so very young it is hard to tell how she would have accepted the proposition you have to offer."

"My dear Mrs. Brown, I do hope you will not keep me waiting long for an answer. This is a

matter of great moment to me."

"You know, Mr. Penrose, that there is great danger in too much haste in such matters, and a little delay will be of no harm to your cause. You are both young, you know," the worldly woman said.

"Well, I suppose all young people look upon life as very short where matters pertaining to the heart are concerned. Now, when may I call for an answer?"

"You may call one week from to-day, Mr. Pen-

rose."

"Thank you very much, Mrs. Brown," he answered. "When I call again I hope it will be to receive a favorable answer."

"I hope you will not mention this subject to my

daughter until you receive my answer."

"Your orders shall be respected," he said, and taking up his hat bade her "good afternoon," and left the house.

"How fortunate. I did not expect this to come so soon. I am so glad he has not said anything to Agnes, for I hardly know how she likes him. But I do not care what her thoughts on this subject are, I have set my heart upon this marriage and it must take place, regardless of the cost. Just think how rich he will be when his uncle dies, and what more could Agnes wish for? She will have the doors of the best society thrown open to her if she marries into the Penrose family. I must find out Agnes' opinion on this subject," she thought, as she rang the bell and told the servant to tell "Miss Agnes that her presence was requested in her mother's room."

The servant went in search of Agnes, whom she

found in Hettie's room.

"Miss Agnes, your presence is requested in your mother's room," the servant said.

"I shall be there in a few minutes, Katie."

Agnes Brown was a fair young girl of eighteen,

with waving chestnut hair and beautiful, soft, brown eyes, shaded by sweeping lashes. She went through the long hallway singing snatches of a song she had received that morning. When she reached her mother's room she asked in her sweet voice:

"What do you wish of me, mamma?"

"Sit down, Agnes, I wish to talk to you," her mother answered.

Agnes accepted the easy-chair her mother motioned her to and sat down.

"Now, Agnes, I wish to know what you think

of Charles Penrose," her mother said.

"Well, mamma, I have found Mr. Penrose a very pleasant companion and he is a splendid tennis player, but there are many things I have learned regarding Mr. Penrose that I do not care for," she replied.

"Agnes, you must not think to find all your friends perfect. None of us are that, you know."

"Mamma, you do not know what I mean in regard to Mr. Penrose."

"What have you found so terribly wrong with

your friend that you dislike him?"

"Mamma, he is a gambler and scoffs at religion; and I have seen him when he was unable to walk from the effects of too much wine," Agnes answered.

"You speak rather quick for one of your years, Agnes. Do you mean to say that Mr. Penrose is a gambler simply because he takes a hand in a friendly game of cards? Agnes, you shock me. You might as well tell me that your brother, Tom, is a gambler too," she exclaimed.

"I am greatly afraid that such will be the case if poor Tom is allowed to continue in the company he is now keeping," Agnes replied.

"Agnes, you are taking great privileges with the name of your brother, Tom, and Mr. Pen-

rose."

"I feel no wrong in doing so, mamma, for what

I have said is true," she answered.

"Never let me hear you speak in this manner again. It is very unladylike," her mother angrily exclaimed.

"Mamma, you surely would not think me so foolish as to express my opinions in public, as I

have done in your presence?"

"It is very hard to tell what a thoughtless girl like you would be guilty of doing," her mother said.

"Mamma, how can you speak so?" Agnes said in

a trembling voice.

"I suppose I may as well let you know why I sent for you, Agnes. I have received a proposal for your hand in marriage and I wish you to understand that I will not have you refuse, for any reason you may see fit to offer."

"Dear mamma, do you not think that you are wrong in making me accept for my husband someone for whom I may not have one spark of respect, let alone love; but do tell me to whom am

I indebted for this honor?"

"As you must know sooner or later, I may as well tell you that it is none other than the wealthy Mr. Penrose," her mother answered.

"Oh, mamma! If it had been anyone else in this world but Charlie Penrose. This is awful. I can never think of consenting to become his wife, mamma. I have not one spark of love in my heart for that man."

"Agnes, you must think that all marriages are contracted for love. You silly schoolgirl, I am

surprised at you."

"Oh, mamma," Agnes pleaded, "do let me refuse this offer, if you do not wish to break my heart."

"Agnes, your foolishness provokes me. I wish to hear no more such nonsense. You can make up your mind to become the wife of Charles Penrose, and I will not hear anything more said upon this subject until your engagement is openly announced. Now you may go. I have told you my

wishes and I want them executed."

Agnes left her mother with an aching heart. When she reached her own room she turned the key in the door and sank upon her knees at the bedside, giving vent to her sorrow by a passionate outburst of tears. Her hopes were all dead. knew not how long she had been in her room until she was surprised to hear the bell ringing for sup-Arising from her knees she went to the mirror, and when she looked upon the image of her tear-stained face she knew it would be impossible to go down to supper without showing signs of her recent grief. She bathed her face and started for a couch, but she knew someone would be sure to come in search of her if she did not appear at the supper table. She had just reached her couch when, as she had surmised, she heard someone enter the room, and, looking up, saw Hettie standing beside her.

"Why did you not go down for supper? Mother is very angry at your absence."

"Oh," Agnes replied, "I have such a dreadful

headache I could not think of eating."

"I am sorry you are not well. Won't you let me get you a cup of tea? I am sure your head would feel better if you were to drink something," Hettie said and left the room to get her a cup of tea.

"If I could only have Hettie share my secret," Agnes thought, "what a blessing it would be to pour out my grief to her. But I must try to bear it alone. I know it would only make Hettie more unhappy."

Hettie returned with a cup of tea. When Agnes had finished drinking she put the cup back on the tray, and Hettie, sitting down on the couch, threw

an arm around her, saying:

"If I only could help you bear your pain, Agnes,

dear."

"Oh, Hettie," Agnes replied, "I hope you may never know the pain I am suffering this night," and the tears she had tried so hard to keep back ran down her pale cheeks like rain.

"Let me share your secret and trouble," Hettie

pleaded.

"Oh, Hettie, dear, it would be of no use, you would then be as unhappy as I am," Agnes re-

plied.

"Agnes, if you really feel that you would rather not have me share your trouble I shall not force you to do so, but it would cause me great pain if I thought I could be of any service to you in an hour of need and you refused to accept my aid," Hettie said.

"You may yet have to help me bear my misery, Hettie, dear, but I shall wait until I find there is no escape," Agnes whispered through her tears.

"Well, Agnes, whatever your troubles may be I hope you will find they have a pleasant ending,"

Hettie replied.

"If I could only think that such would be the case," Agnes said, "wouldn't I be happy though?" and at the thought she seemed to brighten up a little.

Hettie wondered in her mind what it could be that had made Agnes so unhappy, yet she could not but think that whatever it might be it had arisen from the interview Agnes had had with her mother, and which she knew had taken place in her proud mother's room that very afternoon.

The weeks passed and Agnes seemed to be getting paler and more careworn. All but her cruel, proud mother were at a loss to find what had overtaken Agnes' bright spirits. Hettie longed to give her the comfort for which she knew her heart was longing, but she refrained from intruding upon her, preferring rather to wait until the proper time arrived, which Agnes had spoken of.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE evening at last arrived when Charles Penrose was to receive his answer. Mrs. Brown entered the room dressed in a magnificent evening gown of fawn colored broadcloth with a long train.

"Good evening, Mrs. Brown. I trust you are going to make my call this evening a pleasant one.

I find suspense very hard to bear," he said.

"You know your request was so sudden, Mr. Penrose. I could not think of giving you an answer sooner, but you have my permission to speak to Agnes on this subject, and if she consents to become your wife I assure you of my best wishes for your future happiness," she said.

"You have removed a great load from my heart and I thank you very much for your kindness,"

he replied.

"You may find that Agnes objects to your suit, but she is such a child I think you can talk her into accepting you for her husband," Mrs. Brown said.

"Is Agnes home?"

"Really I cannot say, Mr. Penrose, but I shall go in search of her."

"Thank you so much," he said, "you are more than kind."

Agnes was already dressed when her worldly mother entered the room.

"I see you have done as I requested, Agnes, but you have not one bit of color in your face. Come, this will never do. You must not go to meet your future husband when you are such a fright. Come with me to my room until I get some rouge for your pale cheeks," she said.

"Oh, mamma, I hope you will let me refuse Mr. Penrose, as I have begged of you," Agnes pleaded.

"What!" exclaimed her mother. "Have you not received my orders? How dare you think of such a thing! In the name of Heaven, Agnes, what more do you wish than what this man can offer you? Wealth and a good position in society are not to be scorned. You must think I have taken leave of my senses to ever think of allowing you to refuse so splendid an offer as this," her mother exclaimed.

Agnes went down the splendid staircase in a slow, faltering manner. When she reached the door of the room wherein sat her future husband,

he came forward to meet her, saying:

"Agnes, dear, what a pleasure this is. I hope you will let me be the happiest man on earth to-night. I love you so dearly, Agnes, I find it would make my life unbearable to have to live without you. Do speak, Agnes! Do not keep me in suspense!"

"Mr. Penrose," Agnes faltered, "I am sorry to find you have offered your heart to me, for, be-

lieve me, I have nothing whatever to return. I do not love you."

"Agnes, dear, just let me make you my wife and I shall ask nothing more of you," he pleaded.

"Well, Mr. Penrose, if you wish to make me your wife you may have my hand, but you shall never have my heart, for it contains not one spark of love for you," Agnes answered in a trembling voice.

Taking her slim white hand into his he placed a magnificent diamond ring upon her finger and imprinted a kiss upon her bloodless lips.

"Agnes, dear," he said, "will you not name our wedding day? Do not let it be long, dear."

"It does not matter when it takes place," Agnes

replied.

"This is April. Why not let it be in June, when the roses are all in bloom, my dear? will give you plenty of time to make your preparations."

"Just as you wish; as I have said before, it does

not matter to me," Agnes replied.

"If you could know how happy you have made Dear, it will be like years to me until the time arrives when I can claim you as my own sweet bride; and, Agnes, I hope that you will learn to love me."

At last the hour arrived when he left Agnes, supposedly to go to his home, but only too well did she know that he would spend many hours at billiards before he would return to his uncle's home.

Her heart ached at the thought of being the wife of a man whom she knew to be a gambler, and to whom she knew she could never give her love. Alas, she had sacrificed her young life to the ambitions of a worldly woman.

Agnes had scarcely reached her room when her

mother entered.

"Well, Agnes, I am glad you have used so much common sense and did as I commanded you."

"Yes, mamma, I have done as you wished me to, at the cost of my life. I hope you may fully enjoy any benefits that you may derive from my miserable marriage."

"Agnes, I think you will live to thank me for the part I have taken in this marriage. You are too young to know the value of it at present," her

mother said.

"I would far rather have a crust of bread and be happy than to have money and the best circles of society thrown open to me, which you seem to think such an honor. It is nothing but an empty farce," Agnes replied.

"When is your wedding to take place?" her

mother asked.

"I think I heard Mr. Penrose say something about June, but you will know when the engage-

ment is openly announced," she answered.

"Let me see your engagement ring, Agnes. Oh! Isn't that a magnificent cluster of diamonds. Why, Agnes, no poor man could ever think of such a gift as this. I am sure it has cost a large sum," her mother said.

"For my part, mamma, I would far rather take the poor man if I loved him than Charles Penrose with all the riches you seem to think this ring de-

notes him to possess," Agnes said.

"He will be very rich when his uncle dies, and he

is quite an old man now."

"Well, I hope he will never leave his wealth to Charles Penrose to squander to the four winds for him, and that is surely what he would do,"

Agnes exclaimed.

"You know very little of the value of money when you speak as you do. You should feel honored, Agnes, to think you are to have the pleasure of helping your husband spend it," her mother said.

"I hope that I may never become such a lover of money as to wish to spend that which really belongs to another."

When Hettie learned of Agnes' engagement she

hastened to find her and learn the truth.

"Agnes, I sincerely hope you do not intend to let this marriage take place, when you have no love to offer the man you intend to marry. I hope you will never be guilty of such sacrilege. Agnes, do not let it take place. Stop before it

is too late," Hettie pleaded.

"Indeed, Hettie, I have made up my mind to let this marriage take place," Agnes replied. "I have begged and pleaded with mamma to let me escape from this dreadful marriage, but she is determined, and it is useless to think of her allowing me to refuse him, so let it go on and have an end to it, for I am sick and tired of it all," she said.

"Just think of what a life yours will be, Agnes. Suppose you should meet some one you really loved and you were the wife of another," Hettie said.

"I suppose that will be the end of it, but what is my young heart to mamma? Why, she would laugh at you, Hettie, as she has laughed at poor me, if she were to hear you speak of anything like love."

CHAPTER XX.

THE twenty-fifth of June, the day appointed for the marriage of Agnes Brown and Charles Penrose, had arrived at last. The sun rose high in the heavens and not a cloud was to be seen, but it mattered not to Agnes Brown, although it was her wedding day.

She arose from her couch pale and weary. "I suppose the sun is going to shine its brightest today, to remind me how soon my bright hopes are to be forever past when I become the wife of

Charles Penrose," was her thought.

The hour came for Agnes to go upstairs to be decked out in all her wedding finery. Her friends went into raptures over her magnificent wedding dress and the costly presents that were strewn everywhere around the house, but Agnes found not one morsel of joy in all her grand display. The one thought that filled her mind was that she had been sold to secure it all.

The roses were in bloom, the birds were singing, and nature seemd to be surpassing itself. The handsome country residence of Mrs. Brown looked very inviting, indeed, with its many win-

dows shaded from the rays of the June sun by blue and white awnings, and its broad veranda overhung with beautiful rose vines and trailing honeysuckles, while the grounds with the closely cropped lawn, sloping down to a clear, purling stream that made its way through the beautiful grounds, dotted here and there with many splendid

forest trees, all lent beauty to the scene.

Soon the carriages containing Mrs. Brown's society friends began to appear on the serpentine driveway which led to her beautiful residence. The last touch had been added to Agnes' handsome wedding gown, and the clergyman was waiting to perform the marriage ceremony, when Agnes came down the broad staircase followed by her many friends. She was met in the hall by the man she was so soon to call her husband. She was dressed in a gown of white duchesse satin and old point lace; the bridal veil was of tulle caught up with orange blossoms and a diamond star, the gift of the bridegroom; her bouquet was of orchids and white lilacs, while her maid of honor was gowned in lace insertion and white satin ribbon, worn over an accordion-pleated tulle underdress.

Many were the exclamations of admiration as Agnes entered the room to become the wife of Charles Penrose. The old white-haired clergyman had pronounced the last words of the beautiful marriage ceremony when Charles Penrose kissed the beautiful bride at his side. Agnes shuddered, and she looked like some beautiful marble figure as she stood there to receive the empty congratulations her many friends greeted her with. How terrible it had all been, she thought. "Little

do all these people know how I have been sold to gratify the wishes of my worldly mother's heart."

Agnes went to her room to prepare for the wedding trip her husband had proposed for their enjoyment. Her mother came in to tell her how

pleased she had been.

"Agnes," she said, "you will never know how glad I am to think that by your marriage and by your hand the doors of the very highest society people are thrown open to me. And think what a magnificent home you will have and the grand society affairs you will be able to give when Charles Penrose's uncle dies and leaves all his wealth to your husband."

The carriage was at the door to take the newly wedded pair to the station, and the good-byes had been said when Hettie came to her sister's side,

saying as she kissed her:

"God bless you, Agnes, and help you."

This was the parting blessing of Hettie as the carriage drove from the door amid showers of rice and slippers, which the many guests had gathered to shower upon the happy bridal pair.

"Didn't you think the bride looked beautiful?" Bella Brointon exclaimed as they stood on the veranda watching the carriage as it drove down the country road until it was lost from view.

"Don't you think Agnes looked rather pale for a bride? She always had such roses, but I have missed them very much of late," Miss Elger said in reply to Bella's remark.

"Perhaps it is the excessive heat, Miss Elger, that has made Agnes look so pale," Bella replied. "Well, I suppose it has been a trying time, with

all her splendid dresses to attend to and the many other details attached to such a wedding as this," Maud said. "This is an ideal wedding day,

though, isn't it?"

"I should think it was," said Harry Carstein, who came up at this moment, "but you ladies have forgotten what you owe to Mrs. Brown. Here you have been standing discussing the bride's elegant trousseau while our hostess has been looking for you."

"How very thoughtless we have been. Come, Miss Elger, let us go and crave the pardon of Mrs. Brown. Harry, conduct us to her, please. I am sure she will condemn our conduct as an insult

if we do not apologize," Bella said.

Harry Carstein conducted the two missing guests into the presence of the proud Mrs. Brown, saying that he hoped they would be excused for keeping

the guests waiting.

"Thank you, Mr. Carstein, you have been very kind in bringing them back; we have been waiting for you all," Mrs. Brown answered, and leaving them proceded to attend to the wants of some of her "swell friends," as Tom called the society peo-

ple.

Dancing was indulged in until the small hours of the morning, when the guests who lived near by took leave of the gay scene to go to their homes, while there were others who came from a distance and whose stay was to be extended. Thus ended the grand wedding of Agnes Brown; and Mrs. Brown was overjoyed with her success.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE summer months were drawing to a close and it was thought that Nellie Brown could not live very long. Nellie was a frail girl of twenty-one, with auburn hair and handsome large, dark eyes. She had been ill in the spring, but Mrs. Brown was so absorbed in her preparations for Agnes' wedding that she had failed to notice it.

The wedding was over and Tom and all the company had gone from Maple Crest. Mrs. Brown had gone to some distant watering place, as she said she was in need of a change after the excite-

ment of her fair daughter's wedding.

Nellie's health was failing rapidly.
"I wish Agnes would return soon," she said as Hettie sat by the side of her couch one bright September day.

"It will not be long, Nellie," Hettie answered. "Have there been any letters from mamma?"

"Yes, dear; father received one this morning."
"Did mamma express in her letter any intention of coming home?"

"No, I believe not," Hettie answered.

"Hettie, dear, I should like very much to see our clergyman to-morrow."

"I will have Jim bring him to you in the morn-

ing."

"I hardly know what I would do without your help, Hettie, dear. You are so good and kind to me. I know you must be tired though, having to sit here in my sick room night and day, when everyone else is enjoying their summer vacation," she said.

"Nellie, dear, I would not enjoy myself if I were away, knowing that you were here alone. I would think my happiness almost complete if I could make you feel strong and bring the roses back to your cheeks once more," Hettie said.

"Well, sister, you shall never see the roses bloom again in my cheeks," Nellie answered, "for I feel

that my life is almost at a close."

"I hope, dear, you will be spared to enjoy many happy days before you are called away from us," Hettie answered, but her voice was checked by emotion.

The next day, Hettie, true to her promise, had Jim Smith go to the rectory to bring the Reverend Father Loftion to the bedside of her sister.

Everything was beautiful in the summer's dying glory. The leaves had commenced falling upon the well-kept lawn of Maple Crest as Father Loftion drove up to the door of Lettie Brown's fine country home.

When Father Loftion reached Nellie's room she

greeted him with a smile of welcome.

"How glad I am to see you, Father," she said. "Well, Nellie, how are you this morning?" he asked.

"Very weak," Nellie answered, "and my cough is so troublesome."

"We must see if we cannot find something for

this cough, my child."

"It is not for long that I will be in need of relief in this sad world, for I hope soon to enter my Father's home," Nellie replied.

"Are you reconciled to leave this busy world,

my child?" Father Loftion asked.

"Yes, Father," she answered, "for there is noth-

ing here but misery and sin."

We must draw the veil over Nellie's further conversation, as she made her peace with God and prepared her pure soul to enter back into its heavenly kingdom.

When Father Loftion left her side he met Hettie

in the hall.

"I am sorry to be the bearer of such sad tidings, but I find your sister has not many days to spend in this world. Where is your mother?" he inquired.

"She has gone from home on a vacation," Hettie

replied.

"I think you had better inform your mother that Nellie has but a few short days to spend upon this

earth," he said.

The carriage was waiting at the door to take Father Loftion back to the rectory. Hettie came out upon the veranda and told Jim Smith to stop in the town of C—— and tell her father to send a dispatch at once for her mother to come immediately if she wished to see Nellie alive.

"I shall call to-morrow," Father Loftion said.

"I will send the carriage for you, Father," Hettie

replied, and returned to Nellie's room.

"How do you feel now, dear," she asked, "since the Reverend Father Loftion has called to comfort

you?"

"I am very happy, Hettie. I have not one care in this world, but it grieves me to know that you are so neglected. I do hope mamma will see her mistake before it is too late. It grieves me more than I can tell to see that mamma finds nothing to live for but the pleasures of this empty world; and I hope, Hettie, dear, that you will try to comfort poor, dear Agnes, for I am sure that her marriage has been a very unhappy one although she has not complained. How I would like to see her and clasp her to my heart before my Heavenly Father calls me to my happy home," she said.

"Nellie, I hope Agnes will return before our Heavenly Father calls you home. How my poor heart shall miss you when you leave your earthly

home."

"My dear sister, when your earthly work is done, I hope God will let you share my crown. Do not weep so for me, Hettie. I shall be far happier than in this sphere where life is but a passing show," she said in her weak and trembling voice.

When the day had gone and the young September moon appeared in all its glory, John Brown drove up the avenue of his fine country home to

see his dying child.

"Oh, father, I am so glad you have come!"

Hettie exclaimed.

"How is Nellie to-night?" he inquired. "I would have come sooner, but business has been very

brisk, and Tom being away made it impossible for me to leave. Maggie Burke has not given me one moment's peace since she heard Jim Smith telling me that you wished me to send a dispatch for your mother," he said.

"Poor Maggie, I suppose she is in a great way,"

Hettie replied.

"She insisted upon coming up here to-night, to stay until the last, and I know Lettie will be very angry, for she left Maggie to care for the house down there in C——," he said.

"Did you receive any reply to mother's dis-

patch?" Hettie asked.

"No," her father answered.

"Well, father, come and I will take you to Nellie's room, for I know you will not have long to stay with us."

"Oh, papa! How pleased I am to see you,"

Nellie said.

"How are you feeling to-night, Nellie?"

"I am so very happy, father, since the Reverend Father Loftion has been to comfort and console me to-day. He is a man after God's own heart," Nellie said. "And just think, he is coming over again to-morrow. Papa, when I am gone I hope you will never be so busy as to overlook poor dear Hettie. Give her all the love and kindness that you can, for her life is sad and lonely, although she is so good and kind to everyone. Does she not deserve a better fate?" Nellie asked.

"Dear, it pains me to hear you speak in this manner, although you will never know, Nellie, how much Hettie has suffered at the hands of her own proud mother. I have always tried to bestow

all the love and care I could on Hettie, to help fill up the gap which her mother's neglect has caused in her life," her father answered.

"Do you think mamma and Agnes will be home soon? It seems so long since they went away,"

she said.

"Well, Nellie," her father replied, "your mother may return at any time, but for Agnes I cannot answer."

"I would like so much to bid them all goodbye before I leave them, and I know my time in this world is almost at an end."

"Nellie, you make me feel very sad when you

speak of leaving us," her father said.

"I hope you will not regret my death, papa, dear, for all your immense fortune could never buy the happiness that I feel sure is in store for me in my Father's home and I shall count the hours until He calls me for His own," she said.

"Nellie, dear, I wish that we all could look upon death as you do. To you it seems to have no ter-

rors," he replied.

Agnes returned from her wedding tour just in time to see Nellie before she closed her eyes in death.

"Oh, Agnes!" Nellie exclaimed, "I am so glad to see you. I wished so much to say good-bye to you before death claimed me for its own."

"Nellie, dear, you must not die and leave me when I need you so badly. My heart is broken

with sorrow," Agnes said through her tears.

"Sister, dear, I am sorry to hear you speak so, for your life should be one of joy, and not sorrow, but I hope, Agnes, dear, that you will lay your

troubles at our Saviour's feet and you shall be comforted. Put your trust in God, my sister, for has He not said, 'Ask and ye shall receive'?"

This was the parting advice of Nellie before she found the place she longed for, and which

she hoped to find in death.

"Hasn't mamma come yet?"

"No, Nellie, dear," Hettie replied.

"What time is it, please?"

"Just four o'clock."

"Then I shall not see mamma, but tell her I would have liked to had her kiss my lips. I feel my eyes grow dim, and I hear them call my name. My earthly work is done. Let me kiss you once more, Hettie, dear, before I go."

When Hettie lay Nellie back upon her pillow

her soul had gone to meet its God.

Mrs. Brown reached home at midnight, but there was no word of welcome for her from her dead

daughter's lips.

Nellie was laid within her silent tomb and the funeral carriages had not as yet all returned from her newly-made grave when the doors of John Brown's hotel were thrown open to the public once more. The wheel of business had been silenced quite too long by death's grim hand.

"Well, Jim Smith, did you ever see anything to bate it? Faith, I thought they had money enough, but I'm sure a poor beggar would have acted with more respect than John Brown has done. Faith, he might have kept the bar closed for this

piece of a day," Maggie Burke exclaimed.

"Indade, Maggie, I think, too, that they might

have shown poor Miss Nellie that much respect

anyhow," Jim replied.

"Faith, Jim, the mistress never dropped a tear, and, just think, she was away sporting her foine figure while her poor daughter lay dying at home!" Maggie exclaimed. "Shure you would have thought that her soul would have been filled with remorse."

"Faith, Maggie, I suppose it is not the thing for one moving in the high society circles that the mistress moves in to cry when anyone belongin' to them dies," Jim replied.

"Well, faith, it must be composed of a lot of hard-hearted creatures if they have rules to guide

their sorrow by."

"Och! Maggie, you know little about it, but shure the mistress was always a cold, proud woman."

"Well, Jim, we have lived here long enough to know that to be true before the day or yesterday," Maggie replied. "I do hope Miss Hettie will get a bit of rest. Her lot in this house has been a hard one, but yet she never complains," Maggie said.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE year has gone by and the country residence of Mrs. Brown is again filled with summer guests. The mistress has lost none of her cold, haughty beauty.

"Mary, when is Bella coming?" her mother askd as Mary stood at the dining room window

of their country home reading a letter.

"She will not reach here until Monday."

"Is that Mr. Carstein coming too?"

"No, I think not. Harry is not going to have

any vacation until late in August."

"What a dreadful thing it must be for one to have no vacation until the best of the summer has gone," her mother exclaimed. "Isn't that

young man rich?" she asked.

"No, I believe Harry has no money only what he works for, as he owes everything to his uncle, who paid for his college course and then gave him a position in his office, but I hear that he is a very fine business man," Mary answered.

"Well, I suppose that is all he will ever make out of it. As he has no money of his own he can never get any farther than clerk in his uncle's

store," her mother said with scorn.

"Well, Harry does not happen to be in his uncle's

store at present," Mary answered angrily.

"Have you seen the list of visitors we are to have this week?" her mother asked as she sat at the table sipping her iced claret.

"No, I have no desire to know anything about

them," Mary replied.

Lettie Brown went out of the dining room in search of something and Mary was left to her own sad thoughts, for the letter she held in her hand contained sad news of the home of her absent lover.

When the proud woman reached her own room she walked the floor and a frown marred the beauty of her features. "I must put a stop to this business. A pretty kettle of fish I shall have if my daughter were to marry a poor shipping clerk without a penny to his name, but it shall not be if I know it. I will have to start at once though, for Heaven only knows how far this matter has gone already." She reached the bell rope and rang for a servant.

"Maggie, tell Alice Murphy that I wish her to

come to my room," she said.

Alice left her work in the kitchen and went to

seek her mistress.

"Well, Alice," Mrs. Brown said as she entered the room, "I suppose you find it very warm in the kitchen to-day."

"Shure, mum, it's not the foinest place to be in this weather," Alice answered, surprised at the

pleasant manner of her mistress.

"Well, Alice, did I not tell you that I wished you to go to the post office with the letters both

morning and evening, and also bring back whatever mail there might be, during our stay in the country?" her mistress asked.

"Shure, mum, I believe that is what you told

me," Alice answered in her rich brogue.

"Then why do I find Jim Smith bringing in the

mail this morning?" her mistress asked.

"Faith, Maggie tould me to just stay at home this mornin', for she said Jim Smith was going to C—— and would bring the mail from the post office as he was on his way home."

"Alice, I wish you to understand that such a thing must not happen again if you value your

position in my home," her mistress said.

"Shure, mum, you will never have need to speak of it again. I hope you will forgive me this time

though," Alice said.

"Now, Alice, you understand. I wish you to bring all the letters to this room, both before you go to the post office and when you come home with the mail. Do you understand my orders?" she asked.

"Yes, mum."

"Then, Alice, we shall see how you perform your duty; but, remember, do not say one word to anyone of my orders to you."

"Faith, mum, I shall do as ye bid me," Alice an-

swered.

The weeks passed by and the month of August was at hand, but Mrs. Brown had not yet found what she had so long been expecting, and she was now preparing to go away for the remaining summer months.

"Good morning, Alice! Have you many letters

to-day?" Mrs. Brown asked as the servant entered the room.

"Shure, mum, there is a good number to-day,"

Alice replied.

"You may go now, Alice; I shall attend to the mail when I have finished my toilet," she said.

When Mrs. Brown found herself alone in her room she turned the key in her door and, taking a chair, sat down to examine the contents of the mail bag. "At last!" she exclaimed. Then breaking the seal of her daughter's stolen letter she read it, tore it into shreds and, fearing this was not enough, lighted a match and burned the pieces

in the open grate.

"How fortunate that I was home when this silly letter came. I shall soon stop such correspondence as this, for I have everything in my own hands," she thought as she selected from a side table some paper on which to answer the letter she had just destroyed. How little she cared in her cruel pride how wide the gulf would be made between two loving, trusting lives by the forged letter she was about to write. She thought of no one or nothing but her own soaring ambitions. The envelope was addressed and had been put in her valise before she rose to finish her packing. She was to leave in the morning for her trip to the shore. After she had finished packing she rang the bell for Alice Murphy.

"Well, Alice," she said as the young Irish girl entered the room, "I want you to look very carefully over all the letters that leave here for the post office and any you may see addressed to Mr. Harry Carstein you are to keep for me until I return,

while any that may come with this postmark upon them, addressed to Miss Mary, you are to be sure to keep. Now, Alice, do you really understand the orders I have just given you?" she asked.

"To be sure I do, mum."

"Then, Alice, when I return we shall see how faithfully you have performed your duties."

"Faith, I hope there is nothing wrong in me

doin' as ye bid me," Alice said.

"Alice, do you think for one moment that I would ask you to do anything that would be wrong?"

"Och, faith, I hardly tho't, that a foine, proud woman as you be would do anything that would cause sorrow or woe to anyone," Alice replied.

"While you are employed as my servant, Alice," I never wish you to question my actions. Do you understand?" Lettie asked in her scornful manner, while a deep flush covered her handsome face from the rebuke she had just received from her faithful servant.

"To think! Alice surmised that I meant to do someone harm, but I know I have put away such thought from her mind by the reply I made. I am sure she will do my bidding, although she may be a little hard to manage at first," Lettie thought.

Mrs. Brown left her country residence for the

shore.

"Really, Hettie, I believe mother is looking younger. Her hair seems to get blacker and there is not one line of care traced on her beautiful face," Mary remarked as they sat in the library after their mother had departed from Maple Crest.

"I do not think mother will ever look old, for

the simple reason that she takes good care that nothing disturbs her peace of mind. Poor Agnes looks like an old woman since her marriage. How

very unhappy her married life must be."

"For my part," said Mary, "I think Agnes was very foolish to give in to mother's whims so far as to marry Charles Penrose. I never could see anything about him to admire. He always seemed so empty headed."

"I wish Agnes had heeded my advice, but she always was afraid of mother's anger," Hettie re-

plied.

"I should like to see mother select a husband for me and bid me marry him, as she did with Agnes. I certainly would show her that I had a will of my own," Mary said, in her proud, haughty manner.

"Well, Mary, I hope you will never be driven to such extremes, but you know that poor Agnes

has not your spirit," Hettie answered.

"I am at a loss to understand why I have received no letters," Mary said after Alice Murphy had returned from the post office.

"Why, Mary!" Hettie exclaimed, "why do you speak of having received no letters when you al-

ready have four opened in your hand."

"Those four are of no value whatever to me," she answered.

"Then that covers all. Have you a lover without my knowledge?" Hettie smilingly inquired. "Really, Mary, you look like a summer storm cloud

with that blushing frown upon your face."

"I am sure, Hettie, it is enough to make one cross when she meets the same disappointment

day after day," she said as she rose to leave the table.

"Wait, Mary! I have some good news for

you."

"Do be quick, then, for I have some letters to write before Alice again goes to the post office," Mary answered.

"We are to have company for the coming week,"

Hettie said.

"By the way you speak one would think that company was an unheard of thing here. Are we ever without someone? I knew we would not enjoy our quiet very long until someone would come to intrude upon us, and I am truly tired of company."

"I think you are very selfish indeed to not wish one more guest to join our stay here at Maple

Crest."

"Pray, do tell me who the guest is to be. I am sure I have been standing here fully ten minutes just to find out," Mary exclaimed.

"It is to be none other than Mrs. Agnes Pen-

rose," Hettie replied in a pleased tone.

"What a surprise! Why, Hettie, I understood that Agnes was not coming home from the shore until September."

"Well, I do not know the reason she has re-

turned, but we shall know to-morrow."

"Poor Agnes," said Mary, "we must try to make her visit a pleasant one. Is her husband coming too?"

"I cannot say," Hettie replied. "Agnes did not mention him in her letter."

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE years have passed and we find many changes. Philip Burns has become a temperance man once more. He has been saved to retrieve what he lost during his long years of dissipation.

"Father, dear, here is something which I hope will be of some use to you now that you are starting out in business for yourself," his son said.

"What have we here, my dear boy?"

"That book will explain everything," Frank

Burns replied.

"To think God has blessed me with such children after all my years of neglect. It does me good to see my children love me so dearly when

I really deserve their scorn!" he exclaimed.

"Philip, dear, in the years gone by, you were so much overpowered by the effects of rum that you had no time to think of the many blessings God was continually showering upon you," his loving wife replied.

"And how little I deserved them!"

"Well, Philip, dear, I trust that you will never fall back into those sinful ways again, for I think that I could never fight life's battles over again." "Annie, dear, I hope that with God's help and

grace I shall never fall so low again."

"Oh, how happy you have made us. Sometimes I wonder if our present happiness is not some fleeting dream."

"Annie, dear, I trust that we may spend many happy years together to pay for my neglect in the

past."

"Where is there a family so happy as ours, Philip? When I think of the many homes made desolate by rum I could cry out in my pity."

"Well, I hope that they may meet the blessing that I have met and be saved for a better end," her husband replied.

"When do you think you will start out in your

new enterprise, Philip?"

"My dear," he answered, "this money has been a great surprise to me, for I had never given a thought to the fact that Frank has been working for so long, and I feel now that I must do something to help repay my son's goodness to me after all he has suffered at my hands, so I think it best for us to go into partnership together, for Frank is a good workman and likes the business, and if nothing happens we shall start in a few weeks."

CHAPTER XXIV.

HARRY CARSTEIN'S life has been overcast by gloom. Since we last met him his dear mother

left this world for a happier one.

"What shall I ever do without my dear mother! Who will share my cares and troubles now? Oh, mother! how cruel the dart has been that has torn you from me," he cried as he stood by his mother's tomb, whither he had come to say goodbye, for he was leaving his childhood home and going to live among strangers. Little he thought what sorrow awaited him in his new home.

"My dear boy, it pains me greatly to see you have to leave our home," his uncle said, "but Harry, I hope you will never have cause to regret

this change."

"Well, uncle, it has caused me great sorrow to leave this home where I have received nothing but love and kindness, but now that my dear mother has been called away I hardly think that I would care to lean on you any longer. I should like to show you how very much I value your kindness to me and I think this is my time to do so."

"You will find Harvey Steele a just master, and

you will soon be at home in your new field of labor. I know it is useless to ask it, but I do hope that you will let us all hear from you and how you are

succeeding in your new home."

"Oh, uncle, do you think for a moment that I would be guilty of such neglect, after all the kindness I have received from you. To think of forgetting you simply because I am leaving you for a time!" he exclaimed.

"Well, my dear boy, I know you will find your

time greatly taken up."

"Uncle, you will get at least one letter from me every week unless I am too ill to write," Harry said.

The carriage which was to take him to the station was waiting at the door, the good-byes were said, and with a heavy heart Harry left the home where he had spent so many happy years.

The train pulled out of the station and Harry found much to admire in the beautiful scenery which was presented to his view as the train passed on its way—the hills and valleys and the beautiful meadow lands dotted with herds of fine cattle, some of which were knee deep in the clear streams, while others lay under the spreading shade of the trees. The air was heavy laden with the perfume of the new grass and May flowers as Harry journeyed on his way to his new home in Eastern Pennsylvania. The train rolled into the station at length and Harry found himself standing on the platform looking for some friendly face when someone touched him upon the shoulder. Turning around he saw a coachman in green livery, who touched his hat and inquired:

"Are you waiting for Mr. Steele's carriage?"
Harry answered him affirmatively, whereupon the servant said:

"Please come this way, sir, and you will find

Mr. Steele's carriage."

He followed the coachman and found a splendid carriage waiting to take him to his new home.

As the coachman took his seat and started to

drive homeward he said to Harry:

"Mr. Steele was very much disappointed when he found it would be impossible for him to be on hand to meet you."

"Yes, I expected to see him," Harry replied.

"Is Mr. Steele well?"

"Quite well, sir, but he was called away on business this morning and that is why he failed to

meet you."

The carriage turned into a drive which led through a well-kept park, through which Harry could see a beautiful house. The coachman opened the door of the carriage and Harry found himself in a quaint little portico, where stood a gray-haired servant to bid him welcome.

"I suppose you would like to go to your room at once after your journey?" the servant inquired.

"Thank you, I shall be pleased to do so."

Following the servant he found himself amid scenes of splendor, and when he looked from the window his gaze rested upon a beautiful land-scape.

"Oh, mother!" he exclaimed, "if you were here

to share my delight in this beautiful spot."

After he had enjoyed a refreshing bath and was free from the dust of his long journey, he left his

room and took his way down the splendid staircase. When he reached the hall he was met by a lady with a sweet, kind face and a voice as gentle as the summer breeze.

"Let me bid you welcome, dear boy," she said as she placed a kiss upon Harry's manly brow.

"Thank you," he answered.

"I am so very sorry that my husband was called away from home to-day, when you are just about to enter into it."

"My dear Mrs. Steele, in this advanced age of

ours business waits for no one."

"Well, I suppose Mr. Steele will be here with us to-morrow, if it is at all possible for him to get through with the business which he went to attend to; but come, my dear boy," she said, "you must be in need of some refreshment," and she conducted him to the dining room, where lunch was awaiting them.

She dismissed the servants, telling them she would ring when their services were needed, and she and Harry dined alone. At the conclusion of the meal, Mrs. Steele led the way to a beautiful

summer house.

"I hope you will not get homesick in this quiet place of ours, for we live a very quiet life," she said, "but during the months of July and August I make it a rule to always fill my house with young people and I hope you will enjoy my visitors when the time for them to come arrives."

"I am always at home anywhere that my home and business may be," Harry replied, "and I think I shall not get very homesick here, although

have left all my dear old friends in the home of

my childhood."

"And now, my dear boy, we shall enjoy a quiet evening and I trust that my husband may meet with no disappointment and be able to join us to-morrow."

CHAPTER XXV.

THE months have seemed to fly by and Harry Carstein has been in his new home a year and a half. July is here again. Harry is happy as he sits at his desk to write a letter to Mary Brown, telling her how happy he is, as his vacation will be at hand in a fortnight and he intends calling at Maple Crest on his way to his uncle's home in Baltimore, to ask her parents for her hand in marriage.

"Well, Harry, you are not going to escape this year, for our guests arrive to-day and a number are to come later on," Mr. Steele said as he held an

open letter in his hand.

"I shall be pleased to meet them," Harry answered.

"Harry, I wish you would call Ruth and me aunt and uncle. It would be more homelike for you to address us so."

"All right, Mr. Steele," Harry answered as he sealed the letter he had just finished writing.

"I trust you will enjoy your well-earned vacation, Harry."

"Thank you, uncle, I am sure to do so."

"I am pleased to see that Norman Grant has acted so manly by taking your place and letting you have a vacation. I think he tries very hard to show you how he would like to return the many kindnesses you have bestowed upon him since you first entered my office, and I am very glad, Harry, that you have been so kind to Norman, for he has no one to help him. He has been shipwrecked upon the shores of life."

"Uncle, it pleases me to help him and I think that if his health does not fail he will be entitled to a higher post of duty in the fall," Harry an-

swered.

"I assure you there is nothing that would please me better than to advance Norman," Mr. Steele replied.

"Is there a letter to be sent to Earl & Sons to-

day?"

"No, Harry," Mr. Steele replied as he took up his hat and gloves preparatory to starting home, "and I do wish you would come home early this afternoon and bring Norman Grant along with you."

"I would be delighted to bring him, uncle," Harry replied, "but I'm afraid it will be no easy matter to get Norman to accept your kind invitation. He is sure to invent some excuse."

"Well, Harry, I hope you will meet with success in your efforts to secure the company of your young friend for this afternoon," Mr. Steele said as he left the office.

Harry's thoughts were, to say the least, pleasant ones, for he knew that Norman Grant would enjoy an afternoon spent in Mr. Steele's fine home. Harry left his desk to go in search of Norman, whom he found very busily engaged in the shipping department.

"Norman, you are to come home with me today and enjoy yourself as my guest," he said. "Remember, Mr. Steele will accept no excuse."

"Oh, Mr. Carstein, why have you asked me? It is very kind of you, I know, but I cannot accept your invitation."

"I will have to have your excuse, Norman, before I excuse you," Harry said with mock gravity.

"Then, Mr. Carstein, in the first place I happen to be minus a dress suit."

"Well, of all things! I never knew you were such a swell, Norman," Harry exclaimed.

"I hope you do not wish me to add any more to

my excuse."

"No, Norman, that one will do, but you must come home with me this afternoon."

"If you really wish it, Mr. Carstein, I suppose

I must go back with you," Norman said.

Twelve o'clock had just been announced by the bells of the busy town when a letter carrier entered the office of the warehouses of Harvey Steele. Harry made a note of the business letters and answered all that called for an immediate reply. When all had been completed, one letter still remained unopened upon his desk. Taking up the paper cutter he soon had the perfumed letter opened and in his hand. "What a strange letter," he thought. "This is surely not for me. There must be some mistake." He took the envelope and looked at the address and then examined the

postmark, but there was no mistake. He found all only too true. When he read the letter it sent a chill to his trusting, loving heart.

"MAPLE CREST.

"Dear Mr. Carstein: Your letter at hand. Hope you will excuse me for confessing that it would be impossible for me to even think of such a thing as becoming the wife of a poor man. I trust that you may find someone among your many friends who will accept the honor you have chosen to confer upon me, but to ever become the wife of a poor man I never could consent.

"I remain your friend,

"MARY BROWN."

As Harry read the cruel letter it seemed to him as though every word of it were engraved upon his heart. He sat at his desk like one dazed. When Norman Grant entered the office and saw him with such a strange look upon his handsome face, he exclaimed:

"Why, Mr. Carstein, whatever has happened you? Are you ill?" but Harry did not hear him. "Come, Mr. Carstein, you are ill. Let me help you to the couch in Mr. Steele's private office and then I shall go for a doctor;" but Harry still sat

in a dazed condition.

Norman took the open letter from his hand and was about to place it in Harry's pocket when it

was torn from his hand.

"Norman Grant, would you be guilty of such a thing as to place a scorpion in your friend's breast?" Harry cried.

"Why do you speak in that way?" Norman in-

quired.

"Get a match, Norman, and burn this cruel letter for me, so that I may see the ashes of my idol and forever bury all dreams of my early love."

Norman took the letter from his hand and when the last piece of paper was in ashes Harry gave a sigh and arising from the couch thanked him.

"I shall always feel nearer and dearer to you for your kindness to me to-day than I would have done, perhaps, had we lived together for years," Harry said.

"Do you feel better now?" Norman asked.

"Yes, now that you have buried my misery forever in the ashes of that letter. Come, let us go and get ready. It is almost time for the carriage to be here," Harry said.

"Mr. Carstein, I do wish you would let me refuse your invitation, for I feel that you would

rather be alone this afternoon."

"Do not think to escape so easily. I will have plenty of time in my own company," Harry answered, "and I want you to drop that everlasting Mister from my name. By the way you address me one might think I was some English lord. Now if you and I are to be friends you will please do as I have requested."

"Very well. If you wish me to address you in the manner of an honored friend I shall be pleased

to do so," Norman answered.

"Here is the carriage now, Norman. Let us enjoy our pastime." "I am afraid I will be made unfit for my work

if I am going to give way like this."

"Well, Norman, you know that 'all work and no play makes Jack a very dull boy,' and I do not want you to become dull until you have met with the success for which you are longing."

"If I reach the top, Harry, I shall know whose hand helped me there," Norman replied.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE months passed by and Mary Brown had received no letters from her far-off lover. At last her proud heart rebelled at Harry Carstein's long silence. "If Harry has tired of my love I will never let him know that it has caused my heart such pain," Mary thought, little knowing the truth.

Mrs. Brown at last has cause for joy as the uncle of Charles Penrose has closed his eyes in death. The haughty woman of the world sat in her own splendid home, laying out plans for her daughter's success now that she and her husband were to share the great broker's wealth. "Oh, how Agnes will make society ring when she is mistress

of Eagle Crest," thought Mrs. Brown.

The day dawned that was to see the remains of Charles Penrose, Sr., committed to the earth. When the funeral was over Agnes' husband invited his proud mother-in-law to wait until his uncle's will should be read. Nothing would please Lettie Brown better. Had she not waited and planned all these years for this happy moment, when her daughter was to become the mistress of this great wealth and the magnificent residence? When all were seated the lawyer broke the seal of the legal-looking document. The stillness was almost oppressive. At length he cleared his throat and commenced to read. Agnes was seated at her proud mother's side when the lawyer started to read the will.

"EAGLE CREST, Nov. -, 18-.

"To my wife I leave in trust as long as she may live, all my wealth and lands. At her death it is to be equally divided between my son, James Penrose and my daughter Florence Penrose.

"To my nephew, Charles Penrose, I bequeath two hundred a year and a home so long as his aunt

lives."

Agnes Penrose looked up into her haughty

mother's face and said:

"Well, mamma, dear, you have been deeply foiled in your well laid plans to secure this wealth, but the price paid for your worldly greed has been a very dear one, for you have ruined my life forever by forcing me to marry."

Mrs. Brown was indeed a very disappointed woman when she found that all her well laid plans had failed. It was indeed a bitter drop in her

cup.

When Charles Penrose learned the contents of his uncle's will, it was in a measure as much of a surprise to him as it had been to his proud mother-in-law. He raged in anger, cursing the man who had ruined him. "To think that I be-

lieved myself heir to all my uncle's wealth, and

now I am almost a beggar."

When Charles Penrose's rage had spent itself, he was indeed a poor, dejected soul, for he had been reared in the lap of idleness and steeped in all the vices that nearly always accompany it. He was to be pitied in his despair.

"Oh, God!" he cried, "had I but a wife's love to help me bear this terrible blow," but Agnes Penrose relented not to the cries of her disap-

pointed husband.

Mrs. Brown had not been idle, as she had selected a husband from her circle of society friends for the beautiful, wilful daughter whom she had parted from her lover by the forged letter, and had now secured a husband to suit her own taste. What was her daughter's life to her worldly heart?

Five years have passed since Harry Carstein received the cruel letter that forever parted him from the love of his youth. Many changes have taken place since that one sad day in two young

lives.

Mrs. Brown has just returned from the funeral where she had received so shocking a surprise. As she sat alone in her fine home no voice of warning entered her heart to try and make amends for her past crimes. This was the evening that Mary Brown was to accept the man of her proud mother's choice for her husband.

Mrs. Brown raised her fair, white hand to the

bell rope and a servant entered the room.

"Katie, tell Miss Mary that I wish to see her." Mary appeared at her mother's summons, look-

ing more beautiful than ever, but with a look of

defiance on her proud face.

"Well, Mary, I suppose you know why I requested your presence. This is the evening for you to give Mr. Kerr your answer."

"My, how you do hurry up affairs, mother."

"I am almost tired of your conduct, Mary. Have I not been put off by your whims for one long year and a half. A great hurry, I should say! I really wonder how Mr. Kerr has had the patience to wait so long."

"Oh, the old ogre, how I do hate him!"

"How dare you speak so, Mary! I am ashamed

of you."

"Perhaps when I become Madam Kerr you will get over my wilfulness. Will I not make a beautiful old man's darling, mother?" Mary tauntingly inquired with a malicious smile, as she surveyed her beautiful figure in the mirror.

"There is one sure thing," her mother answered, "the man who marries you can be proud of you."

The evening at last arrived and Mary had been absent from home all afternoon. The clock upon the mantle of her mother's room chimed out the hour of seven when the proud woman touched the bell, which was answered by Maggie Burke.

"Maggie, hasn't Mary returned?"

"No, ma'am."

"Kindly tell me when she does come home."

"It is almost time," she mused, "for Paul Kerr to call for Mary's answer. Why does she try me so? I am sure, though, that she will submit to my orders to-night. She has given me more trouble

about this splendid match than she will ever know."

Maggie Burke cut short Mrs. Brown's thoughts by entering the room to announce that Miss Mary

had returned.

Mrs. Brown gave a sigh of relief. "Now all will be well," she thought, but the proud, cold woman of the world little knew what disappointment she was soon to receive from the beautiful daughter whom she had wronged so deeply in the years gone by.

Mary was met in the hall by Maggie Burke. "Is everything all right?" Maggie inquired.

"Yes, everything is ready. Your assistance is all that is needed to make our well laid plans a success," Mary answered, as she mounted the stairs to make herself ready to receive the man her

proud mother had chosen for her husband.

Maggie Burke crossed the hall in a quick stride and entered the magnificent rooms of her proud mistress. Opening the low window she admitted a young man of about thirty-two and conducted him to a curtained recess in one of the rooms, then she quickly glided away. She was none too soon, for at that moment the door bell rang and Mr. Paul Kerr was announced.

Mrs. Brown came down to receive the man that she had chosen for the husband of her fair daughter.

"Mary will be here in a few moments," she said.

Paul Kerr was a man of five and sixty with a very red complexion, while his bead-like eyes were

overhung with deep, heavy eyebrows, which gave

to him a very repulsive appearance.

When at length Mary Brown entered, dressed in a magnificent gown of amber satin, while at her fair white throat gleamed and sparkled a beautiful diamond brooch, Paul Kerr looked upon her in all her dazzling beauty and his soul was filled with delight.

"Oh, what a great pleasure it will be to call this beautiful creature my wife," he thought as he crossed the room to take her fair, white hand in

his own firm clasp.

"Mary, dear, I hope you will at last grant me this fair hand and heart, for I love you as my life. I have more wealth than I can ever spend and it will all be at your disposal, dear, when you become my wife," he said.

"Your wealth, Mr. Kerr," Mary answered, "may appear as a very tempting morsel to some, but to me it is but dross. What is all the wealth

in the world to a life of misery?"

"Why, my dear, do you speak in this strain?"

"Mr. Kerr, if I were to become your wife I should indeed be unhappy. Your gold could never buy my heart," she answered in a scornful voice.

Mrs. Brown looked at her daughter in blank

surprise when she heard her reply.

"My dear Miss Brown, why do you refuse to be-

come my wife?" Paul Kerr pleadingly asked.

At that moment a man stepped out from the recess of the curtained door and stepped to Mary's side, saying:

"She is already the wife of another, sir."

So surprised were Mrs. Brown and Paul Kerr

that for a time they could not find voice to speak, but at length Lettie Brown arose from her chair and demanded in a rage: "What farce is this you are playing? Arthur Long, how dare you enter my home? And you, a poor beggar, to dare tell me that you are my daughter's husband," she exclaimed.

"I may not be rich in this world's goods, Mrs. Brown," Arthur Long answered, "but my heart is rich in the great love I hold for my dear wife."

"Where is the proof of all this?" the enraged

woman demanded.

"Here it is, Mrs. Brown," Arthur Long answered as he handed her a marriage certificate.

"And if you wish any further information mother," Mary interrupted, "we were married this afternoon by the Reverend Father Loftion at half-past four."

When Mrs. Brown was assured that her daughter had foiled her plans she raged and stormed until Paul Kerr had left, and then she turned

Mary and her husband out of the house.

"How dreadful this day has been!" Lettie Brown exclaimed. When she reached her own room she sank into a chair and tried to collect her scattered thoughts. "I shall never forgive Mary for what she has done to-day. How shall I ever get over this disgraceful marriage? Just think, she could have been the wife of Paul Kerr who had wealth to lay at her feet, and she chose that good-for-nothing Arthur Long instead. Oh, my Heavens, this almost drives me mad," she exclaimed as she sat alone in her room.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE years have gone by and Mary Brown has never gained her proud mother's forgiveness for marrying Arthur Long.

Charles Penrose has become worse than a tramp, but Lettie Brown has no room for him in her fine

home.

Agnes Penrose drooped day by day as her husband's cruelty became more and more unbearable. He taunted her upon her religion, for he found that was the only point which could make his wife flinch.

"Your lady mother thought of her religion, I'll vow, or you would never have become my wife. I am glad though that has made you suffer for her

wants," he said one day.

"I am sorry to confess, Charles, that there are far too many such Catholics in this world as my poor, misguided mother. They are indeed a sad disgrace to the religion in which they profess to believe. Far better for anyone to be dead than unite their lives to one without faith," Agnes exclaimed.

This is but part of the scenes that occurred fre-

quently in Agnes Penrose's home, and it is not to be wondered at, for unhappiness is sure to follow the curse of mixed marriages, but at the approach of spring, after she had been married four years, death released her from the union that had been secured at the cost of her young life.

Tom Brown had gone on his way without a parent's loving hand to stay his downward course. Father Loftion's heart was filled with sorrow to find that Tom had not the strength to overcome his vices. He pleaded in vain with Tom to reform before it was too late. Poor Tom made promise after promise, only to break them, but Tom was not alone to blame. When John Brown found his business in a great rush Tom was always called to help secure the money that rolled over the bar. When there he was sure to be invited to join his companions in their glasses, and, being so good-hearted, he found it impossible to refuse.

Money had become John Brown's god. He had no thought whatever in regard to his children's welfare.

Hettie begged and pleaded with Tom to give up drink and his ill-chosen companions, but, dearly as he loved her, the wayward boy found it impos-

sible to heed her warning.

Tom left his home one day to take a gunning trip with a number of his gay and reckless companions much to Hettie's distress. She begged and pleaded with Tom to stop at home, but her pleadings were in vain.

The gay party had been gone but ten days when Tom Brown's body was brought home cold in death. Sad to say, while Tom was under the influence of rum he had been carelessly handling his rifle, which was accidently discharged and the full contents pierced his heart.

After Tom Brown's funeral had taken place, Father Loftion called at the splendid home of

John Brown.

"There is someone in the parlor, who wishes to see you, ma'am," a new servant announced.

"Did they give you no card?"

"No, ma'am."

Lettie Brown arranged the rich lace on her black crepe gown before she left her room to receive her visitor.

When Father Loftion found himself alone in Lettie Brown's fine home his thoughts were very sad, for amid all the dazzling splendor there appeared an awful spectre to his mind, as he well knew this to be a divided household, where neither fear nor the love of God reigned.

Lettie Brown appeared in all her haughty pride. Death had not left its cruel sting in Let-

tie Brown's cold heart.

On seeing who her visitor was Mrs. Brown made him a cold, haughty bow, but Father Loftion cared little how the proud woman of the world received him. He had a duty to perform and was there for

that purpose.

"Mrs. Brown, I am very sorry to hear that your son met such an untimely death, and I sincerely trust that you will profit by this warning and make peace with God. Take back to your heart the daughter whom you have disowned for marrying Arthur Long. God knows, woman, your fireside is desolate enough, for death has already claimed three of those precious pearls that have been delivered into your keeping, and you will most certainly be called upon by your God to give a just account of your stewardship in regard to these children."

"Sir! Who sent for you to come here to preach

to me?" Lettie asked in rage.

"Madam, I did not wait for an invitation. I have come as God's servant to try to show you the duty which you owe to your God and to your children."

"When I find that I am in need of your aid,

sir, I shall let you know."

"Woman, make peace with your God while you have time at hand. Remove Harold from the life he is sure to follow. Do not let him have such an untimely end as Tom had. I beg of you in God's name to give up this cursed business. You have reaped enough money by the sale of rum to last you your lifetime. Hear me before it is too late," the young priest pleaded.

"When your eloquence scares me into any such an act please let me know of it, James Loftion,"

she said with a scornful laugh.

Father Loftion arose to depart and, taking

up his hat and gloves, he said:

"Woman, woman, as you are sowing, so shall you reap. May God look down with mercy upon your worldly soul." And with this parting blessing Father Loftion ended his visit to John Brown's home.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE years had gone by. Summer time is again here and the country residence of Lettie Brown is once more thrown open to receive that proud woman's friends. Everything was in a bustle and confusion. The carriages had gone to the station to bring back the guests to the home of their hostess, where everyone was sure to enjoy his visit.

Lettie Brown appeared more haughty than ever, but she had lost none of her good looks. Her eyes seemed to grow brighter and her hair blacker.

Hettie had grown pale and careworn. She felt deeply the many troubles that had been her lot and she greatly missed those loved ones who had gone to meet their God, while from the shock of Tom's untimely death she had never recovered. As she sat upon the veranda of their beautiful country home her eyes had a far-off, dreamy look. Hettie was preparing for a better world than the one in which she had found so much sorrow.

She was aroused from her reverie by the return of the carriages that contained her mother's guests. After they had been received they went to the rooms that had been assigned to them during their stay. They soon appeared upon the rose-covered veranda to enjoy the delightful summer breeze.

Lettie Brown appeared in all her splendor with a young man of about three and thirty, who had a very handsome face and a most fascinating manner.

"Mr. Davenport, allow me to introduce you to

my daughter."

"I shall be pleased to meet your daughter, even though she is but half as fair as her mother," he

replied.

Hettie found no time for her mother's handsome guest. He flattered her mother even more than the other guests, and to Hettie's pure soul this appeared uncalled for.

Walter Davenport found that he was the lion

of his proud hostess' guests.

He was always called upon to select the day and hour for a picnic, and it was always Mr. Davenport who drove out in company with his haughty hostess.

"How I do wish father would come up here and stop this, even were he to stay but one week. I shall ask him this evening when he comes," but when Hettie pleaded with her father to come up and enjoy a week's rest, he replied:

"Why, Hettie, where would our business go to if I were to leave it in the hands of strangers?"

"Father, are you not rich enough without still having to look after your business so much?"

"My dear, I shall have plenty of time to enjoy my life. I am getting up in years. I am sixtyfive now and your mother is not young, but Lettie

wears her age and good looks well."

Hettie found it impossible to persuade her father to stay at home, and her heart grew sick, for well she knew it would be useless to think that her mother would even listen to her warning, so Lettie Brown was left alone without any restraining hand to hold her back from the dreadful avalanche that was steadily bearing upon her, and which would eventually cause her destruction.

John Brown never bothered about whom his wife's guests might be, for he trusted to his wife's cold and haughty pride to guide her through her worldly life of pleasure; but, alas! by that very pride she was to bow his head in disgrace, and his proud name was to sink forever into dishonor.

The long summer days flew rapidly by to the guests of Maple Crest, who little thought what an awful ending their summer pastime was to leave

in its wake.

Mr. Davenport's company became more repugnant to Hettie day by day, and, much to her mother's anger, she snubbed the handsome guest without mercy.

"Hettie, why do you treat Mr. Davenport so

rudely? You really surprise me."

"Well, mother, I think it would be well if your handsome guest was taught to keep his place," Hettie replied.

CHAPTER XXIX.

It is the dawn of another perfect June day, and the grand old ivy covered church of St. Mary's is decked with handsome tree fern and palms, making a background for the beautiful roses and lilies that have been placed all over the building to lend beauty to the scene. The altar boys come and go in their pure white robes, the organ breaks forth into strains of heavenly music, the church is already filled with people, rich and poor alike having mingled in the throng.

Soon a fair young girl leaning upon the arm of a middle-aged man walks up the isle to the rose decked chancel. She is dressed in a wedding gown of magnificent ivory satin, while through the stained glass of the windows a sunbeam steals in and rests upon her beautiful golden hair, making

a halo of glory.

Father Loftion appears to perform the beautiful marriage ceremony that is to make two loving hearts one, and an exclamation of delight is heard throughout the church when the fair young girl's father gives her hand to a handsome man of about eight and twenty.

"Isn't she beautiful? How retiring and modest she is with all her wealth! You would think her nothing more than the poor girl she was years ago when she went to school with me. She never was a proud girl, although she was always pointed out for her beauty," Maud Elger remarked to one of her friends.

"And just think how rich her husband is."

"Well, I think her father can count his wealth

by the thousands now."

"It seems like a fairy tale, doesn't it? They were once so poor and now they are immensely

wealthy," Maud's friend replied.

After the marriage had been performed, and the handsome husband took his wife's arm and escorted her to the carriage which was to take them to the splendid residence of Philip Burns, cheer after cheer arose from the throng.

There was one who found no joy in the gay scene which had just taken place in the grand old church. Mary Long waited until all had left the scene of the wedding, and she was left alone with her own

unhappy thoughts.

"Oh, God!" she cried, "I thought my love for Harry Carstein had all died from my poor heart, but to-day has proven that I still love him. Oh, why was I led here to-day to look upon his handsome face; to see him look with such pleasure upon another? Oh, God! This has been a cruel blow to me when the entire love of my heart has been for him all these years, although he broke the vows he pledged to me. No, Harry Carstein, I must tear you from my heart. You have made me hate your handsome face. If you had but remained true to

those early vows, I should never have been guilty of such an act as deceiving the man who has given me the whole love of his true heart, and honors me with the name of wife, while I have given all the love of my proud heart to one so false. Goodbye, base deceiver. I have flung your image/from my heart forever. Never, Harry Carstein, shall you know the misery which you have this day left within my broken heart. How Arthur Long would hate me if he knew how false I have been, but I shall try to right the great wrong I have done him," and with this resolve Mary Long arose from her knees and left the quiet church to return to her own home.

Hettie had returned home from Katie Burns' grand wedding, and was surprised to see her mother enter her room.

"Hettie, what is all this I hear of Katie Burns

marrying such a wealthy man?"

"What you hear is true, mother. Katie's husband is a very wealthy man."

"Who is he, pray?"

"His name is Harry Carstein."

"Where have I heard that name before? Somewhere I am sure."

"Yes, mother, and you have met him also. He was a guest here as a friend of Mary's at Agnes'

wedding to Charles Penrose."

"Well, really, Hettie, I have forgotten it if I ever had the honor of meeting the gentleman, but there must be some mistake, as the young man of that name came here from Baltimore, while this Mr. Carstein who has married Katie Burns is from Eastern Pennsylvania. Besides, the young

man you speak of had nothing to boast of but a clerkship in the office of his uncle's warehouse."

"This young man is the same poor clerk of

whom you speak."

"Then, how does it come that he is a man of so

much wealth now?" her mother asked.

"Well, mother, after his mother's death he left his old home in Baltimore and entered the business warehouse of Mr. Steele in Eastern Pennsylvania. At his employer's death he became heir to all his wealth, Mr. Steele having had no children of his own," Hettie replied.

"What strange things do happen? It is like a novel; but, Hettie, I shall detain you no longer,

as it is already late."

When Lettie Brown reached her own room she walked the floor in rage and cursed herself for the mad blunder she had made. "Why did I write that cruel letter! Only for my madness I might have had all the honors that Annie Burns received to-day. Oh, how I do hate her and her pink-faced daughter; but, it is all past and done. What need I care? Never shall they know that it was my hand that parted them," she thought, as she sank into a chair by the window, but not one spark of love nor pity entered her heart for the daughter she had wronged so in parting her from the man she loved so dearly.

The summer had almost gone and the many guests who had enjoyed the beautiful country home of their hostess were preparing to say good-

bye and return to their different homes.

The last farewells had been said, and the carriages driven from the door, but, much to Hettie's

surprise, her mother's handsome guest still remained.

Hettie had become so ill after Harry Carstein's wedding had passed that she now found it impossible to leave her room, for that grim destroyer, consumption, was fast eating her life away. Her face had grown thin, and her magnificent eyes had lost their lustre, while upon her cheeks there appeared a hectic flush. Soon her earthly work would forever be at an end, and she would forever leave the earth where her sad and lonely life had found naught but sorrow and misery.

"Mother, why didn't Mr. Davenport return to

his home with the rest of your guests?"

"Hettie, what business is it of yours if Mr. Davenport chooses to stay here after my other guests have gone?"

"If he were the gentleman you seem to think him, mother, he would have gone with the others."

"Hettie, you always were hard to understand, and it is beyond my comprehension why you have taken such a marked dislike to Mr. Davenport, for I have never yet met a more perfect gentleman, and I am sure his manners are delightful."

"Well, mother, I pray you may never have cause

to speak with sorrow of this man."

"Why in Heaven's name do you speak of Mr. Davenport in that manner? I really believe you must have a slight derangement of the brain."

"No, mother, I am as sane now as I have ever been, but within my heart I have a feeling that your handsome guest will leave ruin in his path. Oh, mother, for God's sake grant me the last request I shall ever ask of you. Dismiss this man from your home. Tell him you find it impossible to entertain him, as I have become so very ill,"

Hettie pleaded.

"Hettie, do you mean to tell me my duty? Am I not mistress of my own home? How dare you speak so to me? Mr. Davenport is welcome to stay here as my guest as long as he may see fit. You have shocked me by daring to imply that Mr. Davenport's conduct is unbecoming that of a gentleman. Never let me hear you speak again as you have just done," her mother exclaimed in rage.

"I am sorry, mother, to see that what I have said has been the cause of making you so angry, but I have warned you. Beware of this man. Trust him not, mother;" but Hettie's words fell upon deaf ears, and to her dismay she found her mother's time completely taken up by the hand-

some guest.

October approached and found the summer in all its dying glory. The leaves came tossing down in great clouds, soon to be lost from view under a

winter's quilt of snow.

The carriage stood at the door and Lettie Brown stepped out upon the veranda, dressed in a rich gown of hunter's green broadcloth, trimmed with bands of beautiful sable fur. Mr. Davenport gave her his hand and helped her to the seat. Taking his place by her side they drove from the door. Many were the drives that were taken in the company of her handsome guest. When the proud woman returned from the drive she found Hettie had been taken very ill. The doctor was present at her bedside, but Hettie needed not his aid.

"Oh, mother, I am so glad you have returned. My time is growing short upon this earth. Oh, mother, grant me the last request I shall ever ask of you. In God's name, I beg you to dismiss your handsome guest from this house and let me die in peace. Do promise me, mother, that you will grant my prayer. It is for your own sake that I ask this;" but Hettie's mother heeded not her pleading.

The hour of midnight had struck when Hettie's soul had gone to meet its God and merit its just reward after a well spent life, where all had been

overcast with pain and sorrow.

Hettie's funeral arrangements had all been completed by the kind aid of Mr. Davenport. All was pomp and show. No expense was spared to make Hettie's funeral a fashionable one. The last sad rites had been said and Hettie was placed in her silent tomb.

The weeks passed by, yet Mr. Davenport was still

the guest of Lettie Brown.

"Well, of all things! I don't know what the master is thinking of! Faith, I should think he would just kick that fellow from the door."

"Shure, Maggie, the masther is too much taken up in his business to heed who the misthress may choose for her companions," Jim Smith replied.

"Faith, I wish Miss Mary was in this house. We would soon see him go then. Poor girl, it has just been six years ago to-day since she was turned out of it herself by the proud mistress."

"Well, it's nothing to us, Maggie, for the mis-

thress knows her own heart."

The long winter days drew to a close, and the

month of May was heralded in by thousands of glad-voiced song birds, while the air was heavy with the perfume of cherry and apple blossoms.

Mr. Davenport had gone, much to Maggie Burke's delight. Ten days after his departure the proud mistress packed her trunk to go on a pleasure trip.

The fifteenth of June drew nigh, but Lettie Brown did not return, and John Brown awoke to the fact that his wife had fled with her handsome

guest.

The injured man tore his hair and beat his breast when he found that his wife had dragged his name in the dust. He went from one pleasure resort to another hoping to find his guilty wife and the handsome villain who had ruined his life and home, but his search was unsuccessful, for he found neither his wife nor the handsome Mr. Davenport.

The press rang with the scandal of Lettie Brown's elopement, and her stricken husband and children sat in their magnificent home plunged into

the depths of misery at their disgrace.

Mary Long came back to her home to try and comfort her father in his sorrow, and with her husband and children she remained there throughout the remainder of her life, taking up the place in her father's darkened home that her mother had left forever. "What has all my father's great wealth brought him after his toil?" she thought; "nothing but misery and sorrow."

Happier far was the poorest man in that busy town than her father in his grand home, amid all

his wealth and splendor.

After Mary had taken up her place in her

father's home she learned of the awful wrong that had been done her, for Alice Murphy confessed what had been done with the stolen letters. "How deeply I have wronged the man I once loved so dearly," she thought. Aloud she said:

"God forgive my proud mother's deception."

Lettie Brown and her guilty partner had gone from place to place and from city to city, having no fixed place of residence. No remorse filled her proud heart at the disgraceful step she had taken.

"Come, Lettie, dear, do make those deeds and bonds over to me, for I am the proper person to have them. What use are they to you, dear? Perhaps I may be able to turn them into gold for you, and money is far better in Europe than those bonds would be. Do as I wish you, Lettie dear," he pleaded.

"If I thought you would really leave at once for Europe I would grant your request," she an-

swered.

"Do let me have them, Lettie. This is only Tuesday, and by Saturday next we shall be sailing far away over the wide Atlantic," the handsome villain said.

"Well, my dear, those bonds and deeds you have begged so hard for shall be yours this very night. Come, let me take you for them, so that we may start on our journey as soon as possible, for you know I am just wild to cross the sea," the haughty woman said.

"Lettie, dear, you always give me my own way. Have we not been very happy since I asked you to flee with me? It would break my heart, Lettie, dear, if anything were to part us," the false man

said, as he stooped to implant a kiss upon her fair brow after he had received all the wealth she possessed.

The following days were busy ones for her. Her spirits ran wild with delight when she thought of how she would enjoy the gay life of Europe.

She was tired of the gay life she had led since fleeing from her own grand home, where she had ruled all with a high and mighty hand. Little she knew that in a few short hours her head would be bowed low, and her cold, haughty heart crushed by the hand of the cruel villain to whom she had given up her all. Her proud life was soon to close

in misery and sorrow.

The twenty-fifth day of August, which was to mark their departure for Europe, dawned. Lettie arose from her couch and made herself ready to depart from the hotel. Ringing the bell she requested the servant to serve her breakfast in her room, as Mr. Davenport had gone to transact some business three days before in regard to the bonds and consols, which were to be turned into gold before they left for Europe.

She waited until she grew weary for Walter Davenport to return, but he came not. Making herself ready she was about to leave the hotel in search of him when she was met by a servant in

the hall who gave her a telegram.

She hastily tore it open, thinking perhaps that it contained news of the man for whom she was waiting. When she read the cruel lines they became stamped upon her heart in cruel letters of flame.

Emitting a scream, awful in its horror, she fell lifeless to the floor. The servants carried her back

to the room which she had so shortly left in all her glory. A doctor was called, but he found it impossible to rouse her from the death-like stupor.

Weeks passed before the life that had almost gone out showed signs of returning. During her first moment of consciousness she inquired for one of the servants, who was sent to her bedside.

"Take this key, Mary," she said in a weak, trembling voice, "and open my largest trunk. In the corner of it you will find my jewel casket.

Bring it to me."

The servant returned with a handsome inlaid case, which Lettie took in her own weak hands. Detaching a key from a slender gold chain which hung from her neck, she opened the jewel case, when much to her surprise she found all her jewels gone.

"Oh, God!" she exclaimed. "I have been duped and ruined forever by that heartless wretch. He has left me penniless and alone—an outcast from my home," and she fell back upon her pil-

low raving mad.

When it was learned that the handsome Mr. Davenport had gone and taken with him all her money, she was removed from the hotel and placed in a cot in the ward of a charity hospital, with not a friend to look down upon her in pity.

A sweet-faced Sister of Charity sat by her cot bathing her fevered brow, but shrank back in terror at the terrible curses which fell from Lettie's lips upon the man who had lured her from her home.

One September day a number of strangers were

walking through the wards of the hospital. Among them was a clergyman, who looked about eight and forty—a man who was sure to command

respect from all who came his way.

When the party of visitors drew near and stopped at a cot to pity a poor woman who still retained traces of a former beauty, she became calm for a moment and looked up into the clergyman's face, but as she met his gaze she uttered a piercing shriek.

"Father Loftion! Why of all others have you been sent to look upon my misery?" and she again

started to rave in her awful madness.

"Who can this poor soul be who has spoken my name? My friends, I must leave you to your pleasure while I go to see if I can ascertain who this poor woman is. Perhaps I may be able to comfort her," saying which he left his friends and proceeded to search the hospital records.

CHAPTER XXX.

In the busy town of C—— many great changes have taken place. In connection with St. Mary's Church there has been erected a fine school building and a large temperance hall, and we also notice as we drive through the town a large carriage factory and a handsome business block. A carriage drawn by two beautiful chestnut cobs, resplendent in glittering trappings, approaches the curb while a young man with great love and devotion comes to assist a pale, sweet, sad-faced woman with silvery hair to alight.

All this has been built as a monument to the greatness of God's mercy and Reverend Father Loftion's temperance pledge, as this fine block and carriage factory come under the name of "Philip Burns & Son," and the sweet, pale-faced woman is Philip Burns' faithful wife, who, never in her darkest hour despaired of God's great mercy. She had been tried, as it were, with fire, and had not proven herself dross but pure gold, and has it not been said that "those whom God loveth, he chastiseth"?

Thus closes the happiness and prosperity in these pages for Philip Burns, but to again take up a more sad ending of one who had wealth and received renown as a leader of the empty society circles. She had sacrificed everything to gain, only to lose her own immortal soul in the end.

CHAPTER XXXI.

FATHER LOFTION at last found the name of the unhappy woman who had spoken his name. He returned to her side and waited to learn if she would again regain her senses. When he inquired if she had called for a priest, the nun answered:

"No, she has never asked for a priest, and when

I spoke of it she laughed at my question."

Father Loftion lingered near in the vain hope that she would regain her senses, but Lettie Brown had no such good luck, for she died in her madness and her sin-ladden soul had gone to meet its God in all its awful guilt. "The wages of sin is death," and this proud, haughty woman of the world had truly sown "but to reap."

John Brown received a letter telling him of his once proud and beautiful wife's sad death, but he relented not toward the remains of the woman who had bowed his head so low in disgrace. No sorrow or charity entered his heart for her whom

he had honored by the name of wife.

When in a far distant city a funeral took place from the ward of a charity hospital, a clergyman and a woman of about five and sixty, with silver hair, and a sad, sweet face, accompanied by a beautiful young girl with magnificent golden hair, leaning upon the arm of a handsome young man, were the only ones who followed the sad funeral train, and but for the love and charity of these four, Lettie Brown's body would have been interred in a pauper's grave.

When the last resting place of the proud, worldly woman was reached, all gave voice to one sol-

emn prayer.

"May God have mercy upon Lettie Brown's soul. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen."

In a Catholic cemetery, in a beautiful corner and all alone, in a spot which has been reserved for all those who may die enemies to their God, a handsome marble shaft has been erected, containing these simple words:

MOTHER.

From thy faithful daugther, Hettie.

Such was the goodness of Philip Burns' wife and daughter in memory of the great kindness Hettie Brown had shown them in years gone by, when their humble home had been overcast by poverty and the dreadful curse of rum. What greater virtue than those of Faith, Hope and Charity?

In Harry Carstein's fine home three happy children romp and play at the knees of a tall young man whom they all dearly love and who has been an inmate of their happy parents' home for

years.

Harry Carstein's wealth has made no change in his love for the poor shipwrecked orphan boy whom he met long years before in Mr. Steele's business warehouse. He had insisted upon Norman Grant sharing the wealth that Mr. Steele had left him heir to.

No worldly pride has entered their happy home, and peace and love and God's holy grace reign there.

THE END.

